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THE PILGRIMAGE OF STRONGSOUL

JOHN DAVIDSON

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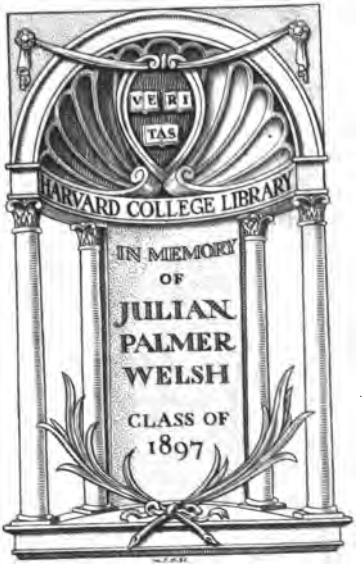

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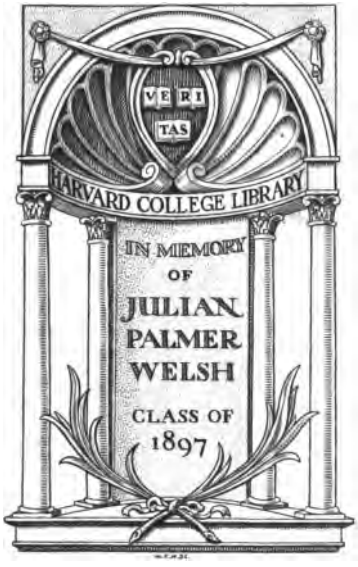

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THE PILGRIMAGE OF STRONGSOUL

CHAPTER I

ON one of the paths that wind about Dunmyatt, at four o'clock on a June morning, a little boy walked slowly, bearing a heavy burden on his back. Larks were shouting in the sky, and in and out of the clefts in the rocks grey-cowled jackdaws flew croaking and screaming. The little boy trudged wearily along, seeing and hearing nothing, his head bent forward like an old man's. With one hand he supported his burden, for the rope that tied it round his waist and shoulders had slackened. In his other hand he carried a stick of oak, which he used at every

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step to help him on. It was no wonder he was tired, for he had been on the road since two o'clock that morning. Still he would not give in, and he tottered along the winding sheep-path, gasping for breath, and with the sweat running down his face. He was a strong little boy; his legs were like little oak-trees. He would have gone on until he dropped had he not met another boy on the sheep-path. The other boy was much taller, and carried, rolled up under his arm, a white apron. He was a shepherd's son, apprenticed to a grocer, on his way to open his master's shop in Tullibody, a village about two miles from Dunmyatt.

The grocer's boy said, 'Whaur are ye gaun?'

The little boy looked at him very closely and said, 'Who are you?'

'Never you mind. Tell me whaur ye're gaun.'

'I'm going away to the west,' said the little boy.

'I see that. But whaur tae?'

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'I don't like to tell you. If I knew who you were I might. Are you Obstinate?'

'Eh?' said the grocer's boy angrily. 'What dae ye mean?'

'You can't be Pliable,' said the little boy, 'because you're too gruff; but then you seem to be coming the wrong way. You're not Evangelist, are you?'

'Look here, my mannie, nane o' your impidence, or I'll heave ye owre the hill. It strikes me ye've been daein' what ye shouldna. What hae ye in that bag?'

'I wish I knew who you were,' said the little boy.

'I'm Saunders Elshander, the son o' Rab Tamson's shepherd. Wha are you?'

'I'm not very sure,' said the little boy.

'No!' said Saunders, bursting into a loud laugh; 'mebbe the polis would mak' ye surer than ye're carin' tae be. What hae ye in that bag?'

The little boy looked at the ground, and then, raising his head, said with much gravity, 'My sins.'

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'I'm thinkin' sae,' said Saunders. 'Whaur did ye steal them?'

The little boy's eyes blazed and he grasped his stick tightly; but he answered quietly, 'I didn't steal them. They are my sins. I am a pilgrim, and this is my burden.'

'Ye're a strange ane,' said Saunders; 'come, let's see what ye've got.'

Saunders laid hold of the rope and untied the burden. 'Losh bless me, it's a pillowslip!' he cried.

The little boy was inclined to resist, but he seemed to be in a difficulty; so he allowed his burden to be examined. The first thing Saunders pulled out was a bundle of shavings. These he threw up in the air, and the wind caught them and blew them down the hillside. Then he pulled out a broken poker, which he pitched away. Several pieces of firewood came next. 'I've nae time tae waste,' he said, taking up the pillowslip and shaking out its contents. With a piece of the firewood he raked among them, but finding nothing of much

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value he kicked and tossed everything down the hillside.

'Man,' he said, 'thae's no worth stealin'.'

But the little boy had taken a book from his pocket, and was turning over its pages very eagerly.

'Ma certie!' said Saunders, 'ye're the strangest laddie I ever met in wi'. 'What's this ye've gotten noo?'

He snatched the book, and, turning to the first page, read the title, *The Pilgrim's Progress.*

'Ay, man,' he added with a sneer, 'an' sae ye read *The Pilgrim's Progress*, dae ye? My granny reads it. What's it aboot?'

He turned over its pages carelessly, and then threw it away after the contents of the pillowslip, saying, 'Ye can ging after your bookie, if ye like.'

Immediately the little boy dealt him a thundering blow on the head with his oaken stick, and shouted at the same time, 'I know you now. You are Apollyon disguised as a grocer's boy. Come on, for I fear you not.'

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He hit Saunders another rap on the head, and followed it up with a third. Then Saunders, who, although he delighted in mischief, was not a coward, turned with a roar and wrenched the stick from the little boy's hand, but it slipped from his grasp and rolled down the hill a little way. The two stood facing each other for several seconds, the little boy quite undaunted, and the other wondering how much damage he would have to sustain before conquering his opponent. Determined to have the fight over at once, he put in two rapid and heavy blows on the little boy's face. The little boy lowered his head, and butting Saunders in the stomach, upset him; but, being unable to stop his rush, he fell upon him, and both rolled down the hill. The little boy was being severely mauled when his hand touched the stick. He seized it, and with a great effort wriggled himself free. Springing to his feet he whirled the stick round his head and brought it down with all his might on Saunders's nose, shouting at the

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same time, 'Have at you, fiend!' He raised the stick for another blow, but his enemy lay stunned, so fiercely had the little fellow struck him. With a look of satisfaction the conquerer kicked the fallen Saunders in the ribs, and then crawled down the hillside after his book. He had no difficulty in finding it, and he also succeeded in recovering a pair of shoes, two pairs of stockings, and a jacket. With these he climbed up the hill again, and found Saunders leaning on his elbow and wiping his bloody swollen face with his grocer's apron.

'Ye wee teeger!' he groaned. 'If I get a haud o' ye I'll murder ye.'

The little boy was very much disappointed, for he thought he had killed him; but he took his stick and shouted, 'Come on, then.'

'Lay doon that rung an' come an' help me. Is there ony water aboot?'

The little boy laid down his stick, put his hands in his pockets, and stared at Saunders with unaffected amazement, and so solemnly

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that Saunders, in spite of his wounds and bruises, burst out laughing.

'Man,' he said, 'ye mind me o' a thing ma granny says—

'"The gravest fish's an oyster,
The gravest bird's an owl;
The gravest beast's an ass,
The gravest man's a fool."'

Here the little boy tottered and fell down as white as a ghost. The sudden excitement of the meeting with Saunders had made him forget his fatigue; but now his long walk, his exertions in the fight, and his empty stomach—for he had eaten nothing since the previous night—overcame him utterly. He did not faint, but he was very sick and weak.

'Hech, man!' cried Saunders; 'what's this noo? Hae ye seen green cheese that your een reel that gait?'

'I'm not well,' said the little boy. He put out his hand for his book, but he was unable to reach it. Saunders handed it to him, and the little boy read in it for a minute. Saunders looked on in astonishment.

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When he had done reading he closed his book and said, 'I have made a mistake; you are not Apollyon.'

'I dinna ken,' said Saunders; 'wha was he?'

'Apollyon is one of the names of the devil,' answered the little boy.

'Weel, it's the first time I've been mista'en for the de'il, though it's no the first time I've been called one.'

'Saunders Elshander,' said the little boy, rising up with the help of his stick, 'I humbly beg your pardon.'

He held out his hand, and Saunders, rising, took it and said, 'It's a' richt.'

Then they looked at each other for a minute. Then Saunders said, 'I think there's water at the foot o' the brae.'

With that he took his apron and the little boy's jacket and shoes and stockings and put them into the pillowslip. The little boy got hold of his stick and his book, and Saunders gave him his arm, and they went down the hill in a zig-zig way till they came to a little stream. There they washed themselves and

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drank, and Saunders took out of his pocket some bread and cheese and gave half of it to the little boy; and when the little boy had eaten it he fell fast asleep.

Now Saunders was in a difficulty. Should he go to the shop at once, or should he wait until his late enemy waked? If he were to run all the way he could not now be in time to open the shop. He felt certain also that his master would not allow him to serve customers, or even to go errands, with his swollen head and nose, for he had seen his face in a pool and had been quite scared by it. His nose seemed to have spread over his face, and his head looked like a lumpy potato. Still he felt that he ought to go and let his master know what had befallen him as soon as possible. His master would cuff him soundly; but Saunders was no coward. He shrugged his shoulders with a rueful look, however, when he thought of his father and a certain stick which stood in the chimney-corner, and of his grandmother, whose tongue was even more terrible to him than his father's stick. He looked at his companion, and was

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quite ashamed to see what a pair of black eyes he had given him—a little fellow, only two-thirds of his size. He felt his arms and legs, and then felt his own, and was not quite so much ashamed. The little boy's shoulders, too, were so broad, and he had such a look of strength and determination, even in his sleep, that Saunders came to the conclusion that by the time they were both men the little boy would be much more than a match for him. Then his eyes wandered over the hillside, and he saw some of the wood and things that he had tumbled out of the pillowslip, and he at once set to work to gather as many of them as he could. He got together almost everything except the shavings, and filled the pillowslip again. He felt quite happy when he had done this, and sat down beside the little boy, who still slept. He wondered very much who this little boy could be, and what he meant by his burden and his being on a pilgrimage; he lay wondering and wondering until the little boy wakened, after sleeping two hours.

The little boy looked graver than ever,

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and observing that his pillowslip was packed again he held out his hand to Saunders once more, who took it and pressed it hard. Then, because the sun was strong, they went up the stream to a place where an old thorn-tree grew, and laid themselves down in the shadow of it.

'Now,' said the little boy, 'I shall tell you who I am. I am the pilgrim Strongsoul.'

'Strongsoul!' said Saunders; 'I never heard the name afore.'

'I never heard it till I said it just now,' said the little boy, 'except in my dream.'

'In your dream!' echoed Saunders.

'Yes,' said Strongsoul, 'I had a dream just now. You must know, Saunders Elshander, that *The Pilgrim's Progress* is the greatest book in the world. Once you have read it you don't need, and you don't want, to read any other. All that you want to do is to become a pilgrim. I began my pilgrimage this morning, but I made a great mistake. I expected that everything would happen to me just as it happened to Christian; but when I had

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walked for six hours, and got on to the shoulder of Dunmyatt without Pliable or Obstinate coming after me, and without meeting Evangelist or Worldly Wiseman, I began to doubt that something was wrong. Then I met you, and I couldn't make out who you were, for there is nobody like you, Saunders Elshander, in the whole of *The Pilgrim's Progress* from beginning to end. And because things were happening so differently from what I expected, I doubted that I was wrong in thinking myself another Christian, so I told you that I wasn't very sure who I was. Then when you emptied my burden at the very beginning of my pilgrimage, I thought that you were the devil, although at first I wasn't sure that you mightn't be an angel. Then I attacked you, and when I had overcome you, and you asked me to help you, I wondered very much, and thought it was a new temptation of yours to get me into your clutches; but when I fell down beside you and you did nothing to me, I saw

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that you weren't the devil; so I begged your pardon. And now about my dream. Methought I saw one in shining raiment who came to me and said, "Thy name is Strongsoul, and thy fame and glory shall equal Greatheart's. Arise and follow me." And I arose and followed. And the shining one took me to the top of Dunmyatt, and showed me afar off the smoke of a great city, and said, "There lies the City of Destruction." And the shining one vanished, and I awoke. Now the meaning and interpretation of the dream is this: I am henceforth to be called Strongsoul, and we are to journey first of all to the City of Destruction, and thence start for the Celestial City. Thus we cannot expect to meet with any of the adventures which Christian met with until we arrive at the City of Destruction. Wherefore, arise and let us go thither.'

Saunders understood only a little of what Strongsoul told him, but he was very much impressed with the earnest way in which he spoke, so he thought

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he would take his advice about the difficulty regarding the shop. When Strongsoul heard what Saunders had to say he advised him not to return either to his master or his father, but to become a pilgrim like him. This proposal staggered Saunders, and he had objections to urge against it. First of all he asked if it wouldn't be wrong.

Strongsoul answered him out of his book, and showed him a picture in which Evangelist gave Christian a parchment-roll, wherein was written, 'Flee from the wrath to come.'

'Ay,' said Saunders, 'my granny's wrath's gey ill tae bear. But we would be sure tae be ta'en up on the road and sent hame.'

'We might,' said Strongsoul. 'There is no adventure of that kind in the book; but it might happen to us.'

'What would ye dae then?' asked Saunders.

'We might escape from the enemy before they brought us back. If we

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didn't, we would just have to start again when we were free.'

Saunders began to be overpowered by Strongsoul's inability to conceive of any other course than the undertaking of this pilgrimage at every hazard. Still he had an argument left, and he thought it a strong one.

'Hoo are we tae live on the road?' he asked.

Strongsoul again answered him out of his book. He showed him a picture of the Palace Beautiful, and read him the passage where the porter says that it was built 'for the relief and security of the pilgrims.' He added, 'You may be sure, Saunders, that if it takes more than a day to get to the City of Destruction, some lodging or arbour will be provided for us.'

Saunders liked the idea of a roving life, and had more than once thought of running away to sea, so he agreed to accompany Strongsoul on his pilgrimage. They found a sheep-path which led south-east,

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the direction, Strongsoul said, of the City of Destruction, and they followed it for a while, talking about their pilgrimage, and of other pilgrims who had had adventures with giants, and in the Enchanted Ground, and in the Land of Beulah.

CHAPTER II

After an hour's journey they found that the sheep-path ceased to go in the direction of the City of Destruction, so they went down to the stream again to rest and to determine how they should proceed. They would have come to a decision about the way much more easily if they had climbed a hill instead of going down into a valley, but they were both thirsty and hungry, and Strongsoul expected to find an arbour beside the water where they could refresh themselves with fruit, and receive some miraculous indication of

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the way they should take. Saunders, who did not understand pilgrimages so well as Strongsoul, took out of his pocket as they came near the stream a loop of twisted horse-hair, which he told Strongsoul was a girn. He, too, was concerned about his hunger, but he had an idea of his own as to the likeliest way of satisfying it.

Strongsoul did not know what a girn was, because he had not mingled much with other boys, and so Saunders told him it was for catching trout. Strongsoul wondered how fish could be caught with a little running-noose of horse-hair, and was inclined to think his companion was making fun of him. Saunders was glad to find that he knew about something better than Strongsoul, and he became very important indeed, and had a great rubbing and sorting of his girn, and quoted a saying of his grandmother's that 'Fools an' bairns shouldna see things half done.'

Strongsoul paid no heed to him, but

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began to look about for an arbour. Now it chanced that there was a little den by the bank of the stream just where they descended. It was enclosed by hazels and thorns, and there was a mossy stone in the centre of it like a table, and the turf about it was thick and green and sprinkled with daisies. The stream paused for a little at this place in a broad and deep pool; then it dived over some rocks, and hurried away as if to make up for the time it had spent beside the den; and it sang as it went. There were no fruit trees in the den, but Strongsoul was mightily pleased with it, and pointed out all its beauties to Saunders with much pride. Saunders admired everything, especially the pool, and he laughed with delight when he saw that there were trout in it. He cut a hazel wand, and tied his girn to the slim end of it with horse-hair, and was just beginning to fish when the humble attention which Strongsoul paid him suggested the idea of exhibiting more of his superiority. He laid his hazel

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wand on the turf, and sitting down on the mossy stone put one leg over the other and began to nurse his knee. He did not know how to start the subject which he wanted to talk about; besides, it was necessary to find out whether he had more acquaintance with it than Strongsoul. He puckered his brows, and was afraid he would have to give it up for the time being, when he suddenly saw how to work up to his point.

'Hoo heavy are ye?' he asked.

'I don't know,' said Strongsoul.

'Man, dae ye no ken that! I'm eight stane.'

Strongsoul was not interested, but Saunders went on.

'An' eight stane's a hunner an' twal' pun'.'

Strongsoul took out his book and began to read. This Saunders regarded as a sign that he knew nothing about Weights and Measures; therefore, without more delay, he launched into *Avoirdupois Weight*, going straight through it at a breathless

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rate. Then he rushed through *Measure of Capacity*, ending up with the irregular measures, which he enunciated slowly and with much emphasis. He knew this to be a feat, as there had been only two other boys besides himself in school with him able to do so correctly at a moment's notice.

Strongsoul continued to read his book as if there had been nobody present but himself. Saunders perceived now, clearly, that he was master here, for he could not imagine any boy who knew Weights and Measures remaining for one second under the supposition of ignorance of such a subject—a subject which had been to him the most difficult he had mastered.

'Dae ye ken *Lineal Measure?*' he asked, his eyes blazing with triumph.

Strongsoul said nothing.

'Man, it's quite easy. I learned it in a week, an' I never got mair nor sax palmies for mistakes in't; an' Geordie Simpson, him that got the prize for coontin', aince got twelve for't in one day.'

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Then Saunders went through *Lineal Measure* gloriously.

'I say,' he cried breathlessly, 'dae ye ken the Multiplication Table? Dae ye ken thirteen times?'

At last Strongsoul laid down his book, and, coming up to him, stood with his hands behind his back and gazed at him sternly.

'Saunders Elshander,' he said, 'it seems to me that you would be better employed at one of the booths in Vanity Fair, or in the school of Mr Gripeman, in Lovegain, which is a market-town in the county of Coveting, in the north, than in going on pilgrimage. This is carnal knowledge, and you must never speak of Weights and Measures to me again. Such talk might do in the company of Mr Byends, Mr Hold-the-World, Mr Moneylove, and Mr Saveall, but it is not becoming in true pilgrims. I never knew much of this carnal knowledge, and I have forgotten all I knew. You must do the same, or there is no use your going on pilgrimage.'

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'But hoo can I forget what was thrashed intae me?'

'Well, Saunders, I don't know, but if you go on with your fishing I'll think about it.'

'A' richt,' said Saunders.

He was a little crestfallen, but he felt confident that his fishing would create a sensation, so he applied himself to it with all the skill he had. Strongsoul lay down on the bank and watched him, thinking how he was to make Saunders forget his Weights and Measures; but he soon ceased to do so in the excitement of the fishing.

Saunders knew perfectly well what he was about. The first thing he did was to look up and down the pool to see if there were any trout basking in the sun. At length he caught sight of one snoozing on a flat brown stone. He measured with his eye the distance of the trout from the bank, and laid the girn upon the water about three feet in front of the trout's head. Very gently he lowered the point of his

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wand into the water, sloping it towards the trout, until the girn was exactly opposite the trout's nose. The trout moved its fins and shifted its position about an inch. Saunders followed the motion with his girn.

I don't know whether he or Strongsoul was more excited. If he failed to catch this trout at once it would be a terrible downcome, no matter how many more he might catch afterwards. His heart beat, and his eye glared as if his life depended on what he was about. Strongsoul was excited because he perceived now how the girn was to be used. When it occurred to him he rejected the idea as absurd. How could anybody pass a running-noose over a trout's head, and pulling it back behind the gills, whip the trout out of the water!

Saunders moved the girn up and down slowly until it was only two inches from the trout. Now was the critical moment! He was on his knees. He clenched his teeth, and clutched the turf with his left

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hand. With a backward motion of the right the noose was over the trout's head, as cleanly as if the trout had sailed into it. A pause, an upward jerk, and a sweep to the left landed the trout on the turf, wriggling at the end of the hazel wand.

'Hurrah!' cried Strongsoul, laughing with delight.

Saunders undid the noose, and putting his thumb into the trout's mouth broke its neck.

'How heavy do you think it is?' asked Strongsoul.

'Near quarter a pun',' said Saunders, stepping back to the pool.

Another trout had come out from its hole to see what had disturbed the water. It was about as big as the one just caught, and lay very finely; but as Saunders dropped his girn on the water it slipped off the stone and moved slowly in below another one. With the butt-end of his wand Saunders poked it out, when it rushed in below the opposite bank. Saunders quickly

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took off his boots and stockings and stepped into the pool. He was afraid to thrust his wand into the bank lest he should make the water muddy, so he went round to the trout's hole and waited. In a minute it popped out its nose and snuffed the water. It seemed to be of opinion that the coast was clear, for it moved away to the middle of the pool and lay down on the gravel to think. It was trying to account for the absence of its friend, the trout which Saunders had caught. Its cold brain had even got the length of connecting the knock in the ribs it had itself received with the disappearance of the other trout when it saw a black circle in the water about three inches from it. It was a harmless-looking circle, so the trout thought it had better swim through it. One motion of his fins and the circle was behind it, and it felt quite safe.

But it was not quite safe. The whole of its tail and an inch of its body were still within the girn. Saunders was in a terrible state. The perspiration ran down

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his face, and it was only by a great effort that he kept his wand steady. He had never seen it done before, he had never even heard of its being attempted, but it seemed to him quite possible now to girn a trout by the tail. It was a big trout, and the tail looked strong enough to hold the noose. He hesitated, until he saw how stupid he was, with a trout in his girn, not to try to land him, no matter by which end. Just as he jerked the girn the trout rose to a fly. This was the very best thing that could have happened, for the noose was so tightened by the double motion of the jerk and of the rising of the trout that Saunders landed him with the greatest ease.

Now this was exceedingly good girning, two trout in ten minutes, as Saunders very well knew. Still, he took his success as a matter of course; and when Strongsoul exclaimed about his having caught the second fish by the tail he simply said, 'Ay, oh ay!' as if it were quite an ordinary thing to do. But he did not

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girn any more at that time, as he had no wish to risk his reputation.

'Help me tae mak' a fire,' he said, 'an' we'll cook thae troot.'

Strongsoul wished to distinguish himself in practical matters too, so he undid the pillowslip and arranged some of the sticks for the fire. He then went to the wire-fence that crossed the stream at a little distance from the den. One of the lower wires was quite slack, and from it he twisted a piece about two yards long. While he was doing this he looked out of the corner of his eye to see what impression he was making on Saunders, and he was greatly delighted to find that Saunders watched him twisting the wire as closely as he had watched Saunders girning the trout.

One thing annoyed Strongsoul very much. He had no matches. Saunders evidently had some, or he would not have been so ready to make a fire. Everybody knows the extraordinary satisfaction there is in making a blaze, especially in the open

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air, and this glory was to be added to that already won by Saunders with the girn. But Strongsoul, good pilgrim though he was, tried to dim the lustre of it.

'Why don't you light the fire?' he asked.

'I thocht ye were gaun' tae dae't wi' that wire,' said Saunders.

'Oh no!' said Strongsoul. 'This is for a very much more important thing.'

'What is't for?'

'Light the fire and you'll see.'

Saunders felt that the deference due to him as the possessor of matches had been withheld, and he thought that Strongsoul took a mean advantage in pretending—for he knew it was a pretence—such indifference. However, he lit the fire quietly, saying, as he applied the match, 'They're gey big fish, thae twa.'

Strongsoul said nothing, but began to shape the wire into something.

'It's no everybody that can girn,' said Saunders.

Still Strongsoul made no reply, and went on shaping the wire. It took him some time,

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for the wire was not easily bent, but with the help of his feet and a stone he succeeded in making it look something like a gridiron. He didn't look at Saunders when he was done, but placed his gridiron on the fire and was about to lay the fish on it.

'Hold on, man!' cried Saunders. 'They're no guttit.'

Each boy pulled out a knife and seized a fish. Then each waited for the other to begin. Now Saunders knew how to clean a fish and Strongsoul did not. Strongsoul was quite prepared to clean a fish with anyone who knew no more about it than he, but he had no intention of competing with an expert. He saw in Saunders's face that this was a thing he could do, so he shut up his knife and laid down the fish. The fire was needing some attention, and while Saunders took charge of the fish he built and blew it up until it glowed clear and strong.

The fish were soon cooked. Saunders produced the remainder of the bread and cheese, and as they were both hungry, in a

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short time there was nothing left except the white bones of the trout.

After they had washed their hands and faces Strongsoul took out his book and began to read to Saunders. He read him the great fight with Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation, which Saunders liked very much. But when Strongsoul came to the Valley of the Shadow of Death he bade him stop because he was frightened. Strongsoul told him it was very stupid of him to be frightened, and that he would come to like it in time. Although he said this he was secretly glad to think that he was braver than Saunders, and to make Saunders sensible of the fact he read the whole of the Valley of the Shadow of Death over to himself very slowly. He read aloud again when he came to the meeting of Christian and Faithful, and then he laid down his book and said, 'I know now how to make you forget your Weights and Measures, Saunders.'

'Dae ye? Man, I'll be obleeged tae ye.'

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Saunders was in earnest. He was anxious to forget even that which had been his chief glory, because the hillside and the wind and the blue sky began to fill him with the spirit of the pilgrim. Weights and Measures reminded him of the school and of the shop, and now he was to be the companion of the lark and of the flowers, and of Strongsoul, therefore he wanted to have his Weights and Measures driven out of him.

'Yes,' said Strongsoul. 'You must change your name. Since the shining one changed my name everything that happened before is like a bad dream. How would you like to be called Faithful?'

'Him that met Christian?'

'Yes.'

'I dinna ken. Tell me mair aboot him.'

'I think he was the greatest of the pilgrims, because he suffered the most.'

'What did he suffer?'

'I'll read you about it.'

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Then Strongsoul read from his book how they scourged Faithful, and buffeted him, and lanced his flesh with knives, and stoned him with stones, and pricked him with swords, and burned him to ashes at the stake.

'Dae folk dae thae things tae pilgrims noo?' asked Saunders.

'Well,' said Strongsoul, 'when Christiana, Christian's wife, with Greatheart and her family came to Vanity Fair some years after Faithful was burned, they found the people much more moderate. But then it's a very long time since that. I shouldn't wonder if they turn out to be worse than ever; we'll see when we get there.'

'An' if I was calling myself Faithfu' would they burn me, think ye?'

'Well—they might.'

'Ay, man.'

Saunders thought for a little, and Strongsoul watched him over the top of his book. At last he said, 'I think ye're richt aboot changin' my name. It would help tae change my inside. But there's nae use garrin' things that'll grow. Noo ye

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tell't me some ghaist or ither changed your name in a dream, an' I'm thinkin' that's the richt way for pilgrims tae get their names changed. Sae I'll wait till a ghaist comes tae me, an' I'll gie ye my word that I'll no think o' Weights an' Measures ony mair than I can help, an' I'll ne'er speak o' them ava'. Wull that dae ye?'

'That'll do,' said Strongsoul. 'Now we must go on. We have spent too much time here already.'

Saunders shouldered the pillowslip, and they began to climb the hill to see which way they should go. When they got to the top of the hill all that they saw was a valley with a higher hill on the other side, and Saunders began to be discouraged. But Strongsoul said, 'Let us go down into the valley and walk along it, for I think it leads south-east, where lies the City of Destruction.'

It was a little after noon and the sun was strong. There had been several weeks of dry weather, and as the hill-

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side on which they were lay much exposed, the grass was burned up and very slippery. Strongsoul began to think of the way down to the Valley of Humiliation, and of the slip or two which Christian caught there. He was therefore very wary, and taking a zigzag course moved down sideways. But Saunders, who was accustomed to slippery hills, dug his heels firmly into the ground, took the pillowship in both hands, and swinging it round his head sent it flying almost to the foot of the hill. Strongsoul stood still in amazement. Then Saunders sat down on his hunkers, clasped his knees, and with a shout slid smoothly and quickly after the pillowslip. When he reached it he flung it to the bottom, and slid the rest of the way as he had done before.

Strongsoul considered for a second or two, and remembering that, as they had not started from the City of Destruction, their adventures and methods of going down hills did not need to be the same

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as those of Christian, he also got down on his hunkers. But he had no experience in the art of sliding on sunburnt hills, so he tumbled head over heels once or twice, and rolled and stumbled and ran and jumped down to the bottom, shaking all his bones and getting several bad bruises. Saunders was sorry for him; but Strongsoul laughed and said he liked it, and Saunders respected him very much.

By this time they were hungry again, and they had no food of any kind. Saunders looked wistfully at Strongsoul once or twice, and then he asked him if there was any chance of their coming to a place provided for the refreshment of pilgrims. Strongsoul said he couldn't answer for the way in the meantime, as there was no account in his book of any journey except that from the City of Destruction. Just as he said this he spied a house at the top of the valley. He pointed it out to Saunders and told him, because he believed it, that that was a place where they could rest and refresh

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themselves. So they dusted with their bonnets each other's jackets and marched boldly up to the house.

The house at the top of the valley was inhabited by a small sheep-farmer. There was nobody at home when the pilgrims called except the sheep-farmer's wife. She had been married only three months, and did not know very much about life in the hills. Strongsoul knocked at the door, and the goodwife, who was a very pleasant-looking young woman, came running to open it. She was rather astonished to find at that time two boys who were strangers to her. Sometimes beggars passed through the valley in the afternoon, but she had never before had unexpected visitors so early in the day.

'Weel, laddies,' she said, 'what can I dae for ye?'

She spoke sweetly and seemed glad to see them, although she looked curiously at Strongsoul's blackened eyes and Saunders's swollen head.

Strongsoul answered her very courageously.

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'We are pilgrims, ma'am, and we are going by the direction of an angel to the City of Destruction. We have need of rest and refreshment.'

The sheep-farmer's wife took a step back and looked from one to the other. 'An' what kin' o' refreshment would ye be wantin'?' she asked slowly.

'Scones and milk,' Saunders whispered to Strongsoul. But the goodwife heard him and burst out laughing. 'Come in, laddies,' she said. 'Come in.'

She took them into a parlour fragrant with wood-roof, and made them sit down on an old-fashioned sofa at one end of it, while she sat down in an old-fashioned armchair at the other.

'Ah-hey!' she said. 'An' sae ye're pilgrims, are ye? Ye'll hae heard o' Christian an' Hopefu' an' Mr Ready-tae-halt?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Strongsoul, with his heart in his mouth.

'An' hoo lang hae ye been on the road?'

'Since daybreak.'

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'An' hae ye had naethin' tae eat sin' ye startit?'

'Oh yes, ma'am! We've had some bread and cheese and trout,' said Strongsoul. 'But we're hungry again.'

'Weel,' said the goodwife, 'bide a wee, and I'll gie ye your denner.'

Before she left the room she took from a book-shelf which hung above a chest of drawers a thick volume bound in half-calf.

'Hae ye ever seen this?' she asked, handing the book to Strongsoul.

'No,' said Strongsoul, trembling with delight as he turned over the pages.

'Ye can tak' a look at it then,' said the goodwife, 'till denner's ready.' And she left the room.

Saunders sat up close to Strongsoul and they laid the book between their knees. It was a large edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, with a picture on every third page. They looked through it all, and Strongsoul explained the pictures to Saunders. When they had finished it they were both filled with a burning desire to get to the City of

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Destruction at once, in order to begin their journey properly, so that they were very glad when the goodwife came and told them that dinner was ready.

She took them to the kitchen and gave them some broth and meat and potatoes, and a biscuit with jam on it and a cup of milk. Strongsoul thanked her, and Saunders said his 'denner mindit him o' a thing his granny used to say, "It's guid tae hae oor cog oot when it rains kail."'

'An' wha may your granny be?' said the goodwife.

But Saunders was just as pawky as she, for he said, 'She's a gey droll auld body, an' awfu' for mindin' her ain biznis—an' ither folk's tae,' he added under his breath.

The goodwife heard him and laughed, and said, 'A'tweel, laddies, it's no me that'll spoil your bit splore. I wish the gudeman had been here, for he was a gey through'ther lad himsel'.'

'But, ma'am, we are not through'ther,' said Strongsoul eagerly. 'We are pilgrims,

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and we would sooner cut off our right hands than do anything wrong.'

'Weel, weel, laddies, I believe ye,' said the goodwife kindly. 'I ken what it is to want a bit freedom. I once stayed oot a' nicht mysel' when I was a lassie, an' a gey sair skelpin' I got for't.'

'Come with us,' said Strongsoul, who liked the appearance of the goodwife, and felt himself very much drawn to her. 'Come with us. I will lead you to the City of Destruction.'

At this the goodwife laughed louder than she had yet done, but Strongsoul was not abashed.

'Saunders and I will help you through the Slough of Despond,' he said, 'and past the lions and the giants, and across the dark river to the Celestial City.'

The goodwife stopped laughing, and the tears came into her eyes. She took Strongsoul to her bosom and kissed him tenderly, and said something which Strongsoul could not perfectly understand about having a little pilgrim of her own soon to help her to heaven.

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Saunders turned his back on them and blushed to the wall, but the goodwife clapped him on the head and said he was a fine laddie. Then she put some scones and oat-cakes and cheese into the pillowslip. Besides that she gave Strongsoul a sixpence, and bade them both 'Gae hame afore it was owre late,' having told them how to get out of the hills to the highway.

CHAPTER III

When they came to the highway they began to be very downcast. The road was straight with hedges on either side, and they could see very far before them. That was the cause of their dolefulness. They had been wandering about among the hills for hours with the pleasant din of the stream, and the grasshoppers, and the bees, and the larks resounding in their ears; with

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the soft turf under their feet, and paths that wound in and out and up and down, now at the water's edge, now on the brow of the hill, now among heather, now among fern. It was no wonder that the hard-beaten highway made them miserable. It stretched away for a mile in front of them thick with white dust that little puffs of wind blew in their eyes. They could see nothing on the right hand or on the left except high thorn hedges whose once glossy leaves were dry and powdered. They still heard the larks singing, and sometimes a bee twanged across the road, but these sounds made them only regret the more the delightful paths among the hills.

At length Saunders, who was carrying the pillowslip, could endure it no longer. He threw down his burden on the road and said, 'There's your sins, and here's the last o' me,' and turned his back on Strongsoul and began to walk away. Strongsoul ran after him and caught him by the arm and stopped him, and said, 'Come back, Saunders, come back.'

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There was something so sweet and gentle in Strongsoul's face as he said this that Saunders made no resistance, and went back to where the pillowslip lay.

'These aren't my sins, Saunders,' said Strongsoul, picking up the pillowslip and slinging it over his shoulder. 'We will get our burdens when we come to the City of Destruction.'

'What way did you call them your sins, then?' asked Saunders.

'Because I thought I ought to have sins just as Christian had, and I had nothing else to make up a burden with except these things. I thought it didn't matter very much what they were as long as the burden was heavy enough.'

'Then what for dae ye lug it alang wi' ye noo?'

'Because it'll teach us how to carry burdens, and we will be better able to bear our sins when they are given to us.'

'Weel, as I said whan I first saw ye, ye're a strange ane. Mebbe ye'll tell me what for ye keep trailin' through a' this

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stour whan we micht be trampin' the hills.'

'Because I think this must be like the narrow way, which Goodwill will show us when we have arrived at the little wicket-gate; and so we'd better get accustomed to it. Come on.'

Saunders made no answer, but started again with Strongsoul. They walked on for half-an-hour, neither saying anything. Then Saunders took the pillowslip from Strongsoul, and Strongsoul slipped his arm into Saunders's, and they walked along very happily in spite of the dusty road.

They had not gone far in this friendly way when they saw someone coming toward them in very ragged attire. He had a thick stick in his hand and a wallet on his back. His face was unwashed, and his beard was long and matted, and so was his hair. At the sight of this man Strongsoul began to quake, not with fear, but with the hope of an adventure. He whispered to Saunders that this looked like a giant, and bade him be of good

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cheer, for he would fight the giant and overcome him.

Now this was an ill-enough-looking man; and when he came near the pilgrims he wondered a little who they could be and what they were about, but he had no intention of doing them any harm. He was walking very fast, like one who had some important business awaiting him; and he would certainly have passed the pilgrims had Strongsoul not stepped in front of him and said, 'I know thee. Thou art giant Grislybeard, and thou hast slain many pilgrims whom thou hast dragged out of the king's highway; but now I will avenge their blood upon thee. Wherefore, come on.'

With that Strongsoul lifted his stick and prepared himself to fight, expecting the giant to do the same. But the giant had no intention of fighting.

'Ha, ha!' he sneered. 'Get out of the way.' And he kicked Strongsoul so that he fell and bruised his head.

When Saunders saw Strongsoul down,

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although he had little stomach for the fight and could not understand why his companion should be so rash, yet he plucked up courage, and swinging the pillowslip in the air made it twist round the neck of the giant. With a pull he brought him down on his back, saying, 'Here's a new kin' o' girnin'.' Strongsoul was on his legs again and, seeing the giant down, was about to strike him on the head when he remembered that Greatheart had never taken any advantages of the giants he had killed; so he paused until Grislybeard should rise.

The giant got up, roaring, and straightway seized on Saunders and began to belabour him with his stick in such a savage manner that Saunders danced and shrieked with pain. But Strongsoul smote the giant a blow on the back of the head with his oaken staff. 'Coward!' he cried, 'fight with one who is armed, and leave the helpless alone.' Then the giant turned on Strongsoul with an oath and aimed a blow at his face. Strongsoul slipped out

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of the way, and put in another blow on the giant's head which made him leap with rage and pain. He rushed at Strongsoul and would have felled him had not Saunders, who saw the peril of his friend and who was now heart and soul in the fight, caught hold of the giant's leg and tripped him up. He rose at once, with tears of rage in his voice and eyes at being molested and foiled by two boys. He was no sooner on his feet, however, than Saunders, who had got behind him, swung the pillowslip round his neck and brought him to the ground again. In this fall the giant's head was cut.

Afraid that he might receive some more hurt by being taken unawares, Grislybeard crawled to the hedge before getting up, in order to be protected from attacks with the pillowslip and to have a position of some security from which to treat with his enemies. The moment he was on his feet he addressed the two pilgrims by exceedingly foul names, and said, 'What is it you want at all?'

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'Nothing but your life will satisfy us,' said Strongsoul.

At this the giant grew pale, thinking that the boys were mad, and knowing how strong and resolute madness can make even the weakest.

'Come,' said Strongsoul, 'let us fall to it again.'

The giant put up his stick to defend himself, but did not leave the hedge. Strongsoul dealt a blow at him which he caught on his stick; but the blow was very fierce, and Strongsoul's stick slipped up the giant's and struck his knuckles, bringing the blood.

Here the fight was brought to a sudden end; for at the very moment that Strongsoul was launching another blow at Grislybeard, he himself received a stroke behind the ear and fell in a dead faint. The giant's wife, unnoticed by any of the combatants, had arrived on the scene, and she it was who had knocked Strongsoul down. There was no love lost between the giant and his wife, and they often mauled each other, but neither would allow the interference of a

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third party. They were so little in love that when they were on a journey they always kept about a quarter of a mile apart, in order that they might not be annoyed by the sight of each other; and that is how Mrs Grisly-beard arrived in time to save her husband.

Seeing Strongsoul no longer able to fight, the giant struck Saunders across the knees and brought him down to the ground too. Then his wife helped him to bind the wound on his head, while they consulted what they should do with the defeated pilgrims.

The giantess said, 'We can't leave them here. They could describe us, and then where would we be?'

'That's true,' said the giant.

'Well, what are you going to do?' said his wife testily. 'Somebody may come along at any moment.'

'We must take them with us.'

'Must we! How?'

'Drive them before us.'

'It'll be a stiff job. We can't go along the road.'

'No; we must get off it at once. There's

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a break in the hedge. You go through, and I'll shove the boy after you.'

The giant's wife pushed through the hedge, and the giant lifted Strongsoul and handed him to her. Then he poked Saunders in the ribs with his stick and said, 'Get up.'

Saunders got up as well as he could with many a groan, for his knees were very sore.

'Take your bolster,' said the giant, 'and get through there.'

The opening in the hedge was pretty wide, and Saunders got through well enough. Then the giant followed, and, taking Strongsoul from his wife, started for the hills. Mrs Grislybeard told Saunders to follow her husband, and she brought up the rear. It was a field of turnips in which they were walking, and Saunders stumbled once or twice, but each time the giantess rapped him over the head with her stick. This made him more careful, and he managed to walk, in spite of his sore knees, without falling. He was crying to himself, however, and wished he had never seen Strongsoul.

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There was a belt of trees between the turnip-field and the hills, and in it they halted. The giant forced some spirits down Strongsoul's throat, which revived him, and he opened his eyes, and sat up on the blaeberry bush where the giant had laid him. The giant and giantess also took some spirits. Then they put the pilgrims between them and resumed their journey. It was very difficult for Saunders and Strongsoul to keep up with their captors, but if either of them halted or stumbled the giantess rapped him over the head with her stick; and as Strongsoul was too weak to fight, and had, moreover, lost his weapon, he followed the example of Saunders, and did what he could by taking heed of his steps to avoid the knocks on the head.

After they had journeyed for an hour and a half up a steep glen, they rested again at a place where two streams met. The giant and giantess took some more of their cordial, and then the giantess said, 'What made you quarrel with these two boys?'

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Grislybeard told his wife how the fight had begun, and that nothing had ever astonished him more in his life. Mrs Grislybeard was astonished too, and looked at the boys, especially Strongsoul, very savagely. Strongsoul stared back. Although he managed to look at her as long as she looked at him, he shuddered to the marrow of his bones at the expression of her eyes. She had once been a handsome woman, but her hair was of a dirty grey now; her brow was rough; and her face looked as if it would crumble away on the slightest touch like soft sandstone that has long been exposed to the weather. Her eyes were very ugly, and were capable of expressing only two things — greed and malignity. As a rule they had no expression at all. The malicious gleam in them as they turned from Strongsoul to the giant set Strongsoul thinking. He remembered Giant Slaygood, who was of the nature of flesh-eaters, and a cold chill ran down his back. Grislybeard and his wife might well be eaters of human flesh;

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the worst of cannibals could not appear more repulsive than they did. Strongsoul was puzzling his brains how Saunders and he might escape from their clutches when their captors rose, and, placing the pilgrims between them, started up the steeper and rockier of the two glens in the gusset of which they had been resting. The difficulty of the way took up all the attention of the pilgrims. Their heads were aching from the raps of the giantess's stick, and their feet were sore with stumbling along the rocky bed of the half-dry stream. A quarter of an hour more of this rough walking completely exhausted Strongsoul, and he fell down among the rocks unable to move a step farther. He pressed both hands on his head to save it as much as possible from the giantess's stick, and shut his eyes and clenched his teeth that he might bear the pain without crying out. But this time the giantess did not rap him on the head. Opening his eyes he saw that they were at the foot of a precipitous rock of about fifty feet

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high. Saunders was standing close beside him, and the giantess sat on a stone keeping guard. At first he failed to see Grislybeard, but looking about him more attentively, he perceived that the rock was cleft from top to bottom, and that the giant was standing at the foot of this opening.

Grislybeard put his little finger in his mouth and whistled shrilly; then he nodded his head ten times as if he were counting, and whistled again; then he counted twenty in the same way, and whistled a third time. A few seconds after three whistles in rapid succession echoed down the cleft, and the giant stepped into it. In a little he reappeared and beckoned them. Strongsoul struggled to his feet and took the arm of Saunders, who was crying bitterly. The giantess pushed them on to her husband, and he lifted Saunders into a cage that was hanging inside the cleft. Viewed from the glen this cleft was only three feet across, but it opened out to six feet within the rock, and stretched away back, sometimes narrower,

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sometimes wider, until it was lost in darkness.

The giant stepped into the cage after Saunders, whistled once more, and they began to ascend. Strongsoul looked up and saw about the middle of the left wall the heads of two men vanishing and appearing as they worked the windlass by which the cage was being hoisted. Here, then, the giant had his cave. Once up there it would be impossible to get away. Unless he managed to escape before the cage came down, he would never have another chance.

The giantess was sitting in the cleft. Behind her the rock was level for about two feet, then it sloped steeply, how far Strongsoul could not see; but this was enough for him—he knew how to make one effort for liberty.

Slowly the cage mounted, followed by the eyes of Mrs Grislybeard and Strongsoul. Creak, crack went the chain on the windlass, while the men who were working it could be heard puffing and grunting. The giant with

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his stick kept the cage from bumping on the rock, and shouted to the men to hurry up. Once Saunders looked over, but he became so sick and dizzy that he had to withdraw his head. At last the cage stopped. Gathering together all his strength, Strongsoul seized the feet of the giantess, and rising up turned her, screaming, head over heels down the ravine. Strongsoul looked up, but he could see nothing save the empty cage. He heard, however, angry voices, which were so loud that they had prevented the speakers from noticing the giantess's screams. Looking over the edge of the rock on which the giantess had been sitting, Strongsoul saw her at the bottom of a steep slope of nearly twenty feet, lying on her face and huddled in a heap as if dead. Then he turned and ran up the glen.

There were steep rocks on either side for about fifty yards. Strongsoul could, therefore, take no other way than between these. He chose to go up the glen, thinking that the giant would imagine he had tried to return to the highway as he had come, and

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would in consequence search for him down the glen. When the precipices ended the glen was still very steep on both sides, and Strongsoul had to keep to the course of the stream. Suddenly the way was stopped by a high wall of rock which filled up the way from side to side—all but a narrow passage for the water. Strongsoul sat down, and for the first time began to despair. He felt like a beast caught in a trap. But he took out his book, and he turned to the Valley of the Shadow of Death. He soon found the place where Christian thought of going back, because of the company of fiends that were coming towards him, but changed his mind, and crying with a loud voice, 'I will walk in the strength of the Lord God,' went on triumphantly. This Strongsoul said aloud, and putting the book in his pocket stepped into the stream. He looked through the narrow way that pierced the wall of rock, and saw that it was long. Although the stream was very low, in this channel the water ran deep and black and still. Strongsoul shuddered, for there was no other way

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of escape; but he said again, not so loud as before, and indeed his voice trembled a little, 'I will walk in the strength of the Lord God,' and stepped into the passage. The water took him up to the chin at once. When he had recovered his breath his first idea was to struggle out, but he heard the sound of voices behind him. Then he muttered under his breath, 'I will walk in the strength of the Lord God,' and took a step forward. This time the water reached his nostrils, and he had to throw back his head in order to breathe. He was very white, and yet his face was dark, and the expression of it—it would be hard to say whether that was terror-stricken or terrible. He could make out distinctly now the voice of the giant in the glen; so he prepared himself for another step. He pushed his hands forward on either side of the passage, and was just lifting his foot when he drew back. The darkness went out of his face, for his left hand had touched a ledge under the water. In a moment he was on it; it was nearly as broad as the length of his foot.

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With his back to the left wall and his hands on the right one he moved along, but he had taken only four steps when he almost fell—his left hand had missed the wall. Looking up to see the cause of his, for he had been watching the water, he saw opposite him a hole. Without a moment's hesitation he sprang into it and found himself in a large cave. The first thing he did was to take the book from his pocket and lay it down to dry; then he crouched down at the entrance of the cave to listen.

Voices approached, and he heard the giant say, 'He hasn't come this way. The others must have found him by this time.' Immediately Strongsoul heard their steps receding, and soon they died away.

He was very wet, and very hungry, and very tired. If he didn't get something to eat at once he felt as if he would die. He thought very hard for ten minutes. Then he rose and stepped on to the ledge, and walked back to the entrance of the passage. He found that the ledge went all the way, but that it was deeper at the beginning,

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and this was how he had missed it at first.

He ran back to the giant's cave as fast as he could, and there at the foot of the cleft, as he had hoped, lay his pillowslip. It had been overlooked in the excitement caused by his escape. He knew what a risk he ran, but he could not help taking time to glance into the ravine; and he saw that the giantess had been removed. Then he hurried back to his cave, and managed to keep his pillowslip from getting wet by fastening it round his neck. Five minutes after he got back the giant and three of his men returned to the cave, having given up the search for Strongsoul.

The pillowslip contained a suit of clothes, which Strongsoul put on, after spreading the wet ones out on the floor of the cave to dry. He ate some of the scones and cakes and cheese which the goodwife had given him, and then he lay down to think out a plan for delivering Saunders, and fell asleep.

It was night when he awoke, and looking

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out of his cave he saw some stars shining deep down in the water; but there was no moon. He buckled his trousers up to his thighs, and was stepping on to the ledge to go out and explore the glen when he heard voices at the entrance of the passage. He held his breath and listened.

'This is a likely place,' came from a gruff voice doing its best to whisper.

'Who'll go first?' said another.

'I will,' said the owner of the gruff voice, and Strongsoul heard him splash into the water.

Now it was pitch dark between the walls of rock, the only visible thing being the reflection of the stars. Strongsoul thought it possible that the cave might be found by these servants of the giant—for such he judged them to be—but he perceived a chance of escaping. He put his book in his pocket, pushed his pillowslip and his clothes to the back of the cave, and stepped noiselessly on to the ledge. He went up the passage a little way and waited.

'It's pretty deep,' said the gruff voice.

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'So I find,' said another.

'Are ye all in?' said the gruff voice.

'Yes,' came from other two.

'Quietly, then, and cautiously.'

The speakers advanced slowly up the channel.

'It's getting deeper,' said the gruff voice.

The owner of it had passed the cave and stood exactly under Strongsoul, who thought he would be sure to hear his heart thumping against his ribs. He did not, however, and stepped from under Strongsoul.

'Hillo!' he cried, 'I'm up to the chin—and it grows deeper and deeper,' he added, having pushed his stick forward to test the bottom.

'What's to be done?'

'We must go back. One step more and I would be over the head.'

Here Strongsoul was unable to smother completely a laugh of exultation.

'What's that?' said one.

'A kelpie, most likely,' said the gruff voice. 'The sooner we're out of here the better.'

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Grumbling at such a wetting for nothing, they all turned and left the passage. Strongsoul followed them along the ledge and into the open glen, when they had gone away a piece. He had no boots on, and therefore made no noise. He was not accustomed to go about with bare feet, so he had to be very careful not to hurt them on the stones.

The four men were met by four others at the cleft where the giant's cave was, and the eight sat down on the stones and began to talk in whispers. Strongsoul crept quietly up until he was able to hear what they were saying. He was overjoyed to learn from their talk that they were searching for the giant to take him and his into custody. So he spoke up boldly and said, 'Ye search for the giant Grisly-beard.'

'The devil,' said the owner of the gruff voice.

'No; I am the pilgrim Strongsoul, bound for the City of Destruction. Who are ye?'

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'It's the kelpie,' said the gruff-voiced man in alarm, and the whole eight crowded together against the rock.

'What do ye fear?' said Strongsoul. 'Are ye not also pilgrims?'

'Speak to it, somebody,' said the gruff-voiced man.

'We're no meanin' any harm tae ye, Maister Kelpie, or mebbe I should say Miss—I dinna ken what sex ye're o',' someone said. 'But we'll be muckle obleeged tae ye if ye'll tell us whaur this cave is. We've searched the hills hereaboots for weeks but we canna find it.'

'The cave is right above us,' said Strongsoul.

Nobody replied to this.

'It is,' said Strongsoul, understanding their silence to mean doubt. 'Inside this crack on the left about half-way up is the entrance. It's very difficult to get at.'

'We'll have to risk a light,' said the gruff-voiced man.

One of the others took a small lantern

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from his pocket, and lighting it, turned it on Strongsoul.

'I declare it's a laddie!' said two or three in a breath.

The gruff-voiced man who seemed to be the leader seized him by the collar.

'Hands off!' said Strongsoul.

The man looked at him closely and shook him a little; but Strongsoul, who had picked up a broken branch, struck him on the head with it, and the man let go his hold, more amazed than hurt.

'I believe it is a kelpie,' he said. 'They can look like what they please.'

'If he can show us the cave,' said the man with the light, 'it doesn't matter what he is.'

'That's true,' said the leader. 'Where is it?'

Strongsoul pointed them the place as well as he could by the light of the lantern.

'How do they get up to it?' asked the leader.

Strongsoul explained about the windlass, and told them, seeing that they were friendly,

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of the capture by Grislybeard, and how Saunders had been carried off, and how he himself had escaped. They all wondered at the story, but nobody made any remark. They looked up the rock, straining their eyes, for the lantern gave a feeble light. Then they stared at Strongsoul and then at each other.

At length the leader said, 'We can't do any more to-night. We'll come with a ladder to-morrow and see how much of this is true.'

Strongsoul remembered stumbling over a fallen larch-tree on the road up with the giant. It struck him that they might use it as a ladder, and he made the proposal. The leader looked at him admiringly, and whispered to the man with the lantern, 'I'm sure it's a kelpie.'

Strongsoul led them down the glen, and they were not long in coming to the fallen larch. Six of them hoisted it on their shoulders and carried it up to the cleft. They broke off all the longer branches, leaving a bit of each to climb

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by, and then they wedged the tree in the entrance, placing the top against the left side and the trunk against the right, so that it stood pretty steadily. To make it surer three of them held it.

'Now,' said the leader, 'will you go up first?'

He looked to the place where he had last seen Strongsoul, but he was not there.

'I told ye,' he said with some complacence. 'It's just a kelpie. It'll not be me that'll go up that tree.'

'Nor me,' said one, and then another, and then all of them, finding that nobody pretended to bravery in the matter.

'Kelpies,' said one, 'are kittle cattle. I've heard o' gey mishanters happenin' folk that lippen't tae them. I had a gude-brither wha gaed oot ae nicht an' forgaither't wi' ane at a well. He was a bauld eneuch falla', for he merrit my sister, bein' my gudebrither, ye see. An' my sister had a temper like a nor'-east wun', an' hands like hammers, an' likit a dram tae. She took after her mither, an' her faither forbye.

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Geordie, ye min' my faither? Ay, an' d'ye min' yon time you an' me frichten't my auntie? Man—'

'Well, here I am,' said Strongsoul, appearing suddenly, and cutting short the story of the gudebrither and the kelpie and the man's sister, etc. 'I've been putting on stockings and boots to climb the tree.'

No one said a word and Strongsoul began to mount. As he went up the leader noticed that his boots were dripping wet. He pointed it out to the man with the lantern and whispered, 'Ye may be sure it's a kelpie now. Who but a kelpie would keep his boots in the water!'

Strongsoul climbed about half-way up the tree and then told them that he couldn't get any further without more light.

'Well,' said the leader to the others, 'shall we risk it?'

'It's no use,' said the man with the lantern, 'attempting concealment now. If there were people up there they must have heard us long ago, and be miles away by this time.'

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'But if this is the only entrance?' said the leader.

'There's no likelihood of that,' replied the other. 'It's a poor mouse that has only one way to its hole.'

'Well, then, light the torches,' cried the leader, letting out the full volume of his gruff voice.

Six torches were soon ablaze, lighting up a space of the night, which thronged so thick and dark where the radiance died that it crowded out all the stars. Strongsoul looked down and was glad to see the faces of the men. He looked up and was equally glad to see that the mouth of the cave was just above him. In a minute he stood in it, and bending over, said, 'I'm up now, but the windlass is away.'

'Who goes next?' said the leader.

After some talking it was decided that the four men who had been in the water, and who were shivering with cold, should climb the tree for the sake of the exercise, and that the other four should hold it at the bottom. When the exploring party were all up, two of

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them who had extinguished their torches and brought them in their pockets re-lit them. Strongsoul led the way into the cave with a beating heart.

The passage was about twenty feet long, and sloped so much and so irregularly that they had to walk warily. They were all more or less tremulous, but they heard nothing except the echoes of their own steps. When they came to the cave they stood and peered into it. The two torches were quite sufficient to light up its walls and floor, but the roof, besides being high, was concealed by a cloud of smoke. Seeing nobody—much to Strongsoul's astonishment, who had expected to find the giant and his men in order of battle—they ventured in and looked about them.

'Here's the still, and a big one too,' said the leader, laying his hand on a large copper kettle with a long bent horn of the same metal rising out of it, the like of which Strongsoul had never seen before. 'And I declare it's hot!' he cried excitedly. Looking down, he saw a fire of peat smouldering

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between the two stones on which the still sat.

Strongsoul, with horror in his eyes, examined this, to him, strange utensil. He saw that the horn was joined to a pipe which twisted round about the inside of a small barrel of water, and that the water was kept cool from a supply in another and larger barrel standing on the top of a box.

'Oh me!' he cried, falling on his knees and bursting into tears, for he felt certain that Saunders had been boiled in this huge kettle, and in some diabolical manner pulled like a ribbon through the twisting pipe.

'What ails ye?' said one of the men.

'Open it, please,' said Strongsoul, sobbing.

Two of the men unscrewed the horn from the pipe and the kettle and then lifted it off. Shaking in every limb Strongsoul looked in, and was almost knocked down by a strong smell. But it was not the smell of boiled Saunders.

'What is this?' said Strongsoul.

'A still,' said the leader, 'for making whisky.'

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Then Strongsoul perceived how Grislybeard was steeped in iniquity. Not only did he waylay and carry off pilgrims, but he was a maker and diffuser of that deadly enemy of pilgrims — strong drink.

Strongsoul's concern for Saunders was little diminished by the knowledge that he had not been despatched in the horrible way he had imagined. He went over the whole cave, sounding the walls and the floors, and looking into some bags and barrels that lay about, but he could find no trace of his comrade. Nor could he see any way out of the cave except that by which they had entered. This forced him to the conclusion that Grislybeard and his men must have left the cave with Saunders and Mrs Grislybeard some time before the arrival of the search-party.

In the meantime the men were discussing what they should do. They were not excise officers—merely ploughmen and railway porters belonging to the countryside who thought to make money by capturing an

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illicit still, a service for which Government pays a large sum.

'I think the gaugers break the still,' said the leader.

'Ay, but how are we to do it?' said another.

'I tell ye what,' put in a third. 'We can easily take away the worm and the horn. That'll be proof positive that we found a still here.'

'I believe that's the right way,' said the leader; 'it's not likely that the still 'll be removed before morning, and we can come back early and break it.'

'Suppose you pitch the still out of the cave,' said Strongsoul. 'It would be smashed against the rocks.'

'The kelpie for ever!' cried the leader.

It took three of them to carry the still up the steep incline, while the fourth went before and told those below what was about to be done. The natural platform at the mouth of the cave extended a little way up the ravine, so that they were able to keep clear of the tree in

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pitching over the still. They threw it, clanging, against the opposite wall. It bounced back, and struck the side from which it was sent some yards down. Once again before reaching the bottom it crossed the space between the rocks, ringing out a hollow sound that echoed away up into the sky and seemed to fill the whole night. It fell with a dull crash right on the spot where the giantess had lain; and they knew that no more whisky would come from that still.

Having thrown the horn and the worm out into the glen, they descended one by one. When they were all down the leader cried, 'Three cheers for the kelpie!' But Strongsoul was nowhere to be seen. Nevertheless he insisted on the three cheers. How the shout rolled among the rocks and up and down the glen, cheering Strongsoul as he ran back to his cave!

One of the men twisted the worm round his body; another blew a blast on the crooked horn; and with torches ablaze, and in the best of spirits, the gallant eight

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went down the glen, laughing and singing, and speculating as to the amount of money to be divided among them.

CHAPTER IV

It was impossible for Strongsoul to sleep. He wanted to, because his brain was in a whirl, but just on that account sleep kept away from him. Where had Grislybeard taken Saunders, and what had he done with him? By what vent did the smoke of the fire get out of the cave? What had been done with the windlass and cage? In spite of himself these questions kept constantly in his mind. He lay for an hour with his eyes shut, but at the end of it sleep was as far away as ever. He sat up in despair, and opening his eyes perceived that day was dawning, for he was able to distinguish the entrance to his cave.

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It was very faintly marked—so faintly that, to make certain, he walked towards the oblong patch of darkness, less dark than that which surrounded it, and nearly fell into the water; there could, therefore, be no doubt that it was the door. He stood in it, and was soon able to see the opposite rock, then the water, and, looking out, the entrance to the passage. Beyond in the open glen there was more light.

He ate some of his scones and cheese, and slinging his boots and stockings round his neck, went into the glen. He had a pair of dry stockings, but his boots were so damp that he found it impossible to get them on. He placed his boots where he thought they would catch the sun, and then in his stocking-feet went to the giant's cleft. He crept down to the cracked still, and walked along as far as he could, but there was no appearance of any second opening into the cave. Hardly had he turned to go back when he heard voices, and then a crash. He was too far from the mouth of the cleft to see who were the speakers,

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but he noticed that the tree had fallen. Very glad he was now that he hadn't his boots on, for he was able to walk without making any noise. The path was littered with stones and rocks, which made it necessary for him to watch his steps. About half-way back to the mouth of the cleft he looked up. There, on the platform, stood Grislybeard and two men planting the windlass. Strongsoul crouched down behind a large rock and watched.

As soon as the windlass was adjusted Grislybeard and one of the men went back into the cave, and returned shortly, carrying Mrs Grislybeard. Strongsoul heard her groan, so he knew, much to his regret, that he hadn't killed her. Grislybeard placed her in the cage, and putting one foot on either side and holding on by the chain bade the men lower away. From where Strongsoul lay it was impossible to see the cage reach the ground. Soon, however, the men began to wind it up Two others had appeared by this time,

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each with a little barrel in his arms. These two entered the cage the moment it reached the platform and were rapidly lowered. When the cage had been wound up again the men undid the windlass and took everything back to the cave. Strongsoul began to creep along the ravine with the intention of following Grislybeard when he saw the tree erected again, and in a little while the other men reappeared and descended by it.

Where was Saunders? In the cave, alive or dead — Strongsoul felt certain of that. It must be a double cave, he thought, and they had failed to find the way into the second one in their search during the night. Why had Grislybeard left the tree standing? To this question also he found an answer which satisfied himself: to have left the tree on the ground would have been a sign that the smugglers had been at the cave since the search-party visited it.

Strongsoul took out his book and read the account of the siege of Doubting

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Castle, and of the deaths of Giant Despair and his wife Diffidence. Then he advanced boldly to the mouth of the cleft and climbed the tree. He walked straight into the cave and searched it up and down. Nothing was changed since he saw it in the night, except that the smoke was gone. Looking up he saw a shaft of light piercing the gloom near the roof. It came through the wall in which the entrance was, and the crevice which admitted it he took to be the vent through which the smoke escaped. He sat down on a box and considered. An idea struck him like a flash. He followed with his eye the shaft of light, and saw that it was not stopped by the side of the cave opposite that through which it entered. It was perfectly clear, then, that the inner side did not reach the roof. He piled boxes and barrels on the top of each other, and in that way got so far up. Then, by means of holes in the rock, not without some scratches, he succeeded in reaching the top of the wall, which

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was about three feet from the roof. Finding that he could walk down on the other side, he waited until his eyes were accustomed to the greater darkness. He then began to explore this second cave.

He found numerous barrels, a rope-ladder attached to the wall and ready to fling over, the windlass and the cage, and, in a corner, Saunders. He knelt beside him and found that he was alive, but tied up with ropes and gagged. Strongsoul soon set him at liberty.

'It's me,' he said.

'Wha? You! Tak' me tae my granny.'

'Come, come,' said Strongsoul; 'I'll give you some whisky.'

Strongsoul knocked the bung into one of the barrels and made Saunders drink. The whisky revived him at once, and he began to collect his scattered senses.

'Man,' he said, 'I'm real gled tae see ye, but my banes are awfu' sair.'

He tried to stretch himself, but gave it up with a groan.

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'We must get out of here,' said Strongsoul.

'Man, I'm real gled tae see ye,' said Saunders again. 'They tell't me that I would lie here till I dee't.'

'You'll tell me all about it when we get out,' said Strongsoul, flinging the rope-ladder over the wall. Saunders went down very shakily, Strongsoul keeping only two steps below him lest he should stumble. The next difficulty was the tree. Strongsoul went down and held it at the bottom, and Saunders followed with many twinges and qualms, but he landed all right, and was much the better of the exercise. Difficulty number three was the getting into Strongsoul's cave. At first Saunders flatly refused to attempt it. However, the sight of the ease and agility with which Strongsoul moved along the ledge gave him courage, and he found that it was as easy as it seemed. He was soon munching away at oatcake and cheese, while Strongsoul gave him a history of his adventures since they parted.

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Saunders had not so much to tell. The giantess's left leg and some of her ribs were broken. They had paid no attention to him until the still was set agoing, and then the giant cross-questioned him, slapping him in the face, and pinching his arms and pulling his ears when he wouldn't answer. Finally they flung him in a corner with a crust of bread, while they supped on cold meat and whisky. They talked low, but Saunders heard enough to understand that they were discussing how to procure surgical assistance for the giantess, and the prospects of their illicit trade. While they were still at supper he fell into an uneasy sleep, from which he was awakened by the giant pulling his arm violently. They made him ascend the ladder into the second cave, and there they gagged him. He heard everything that was said and done by the search-party, and tried till his heart was like to burst to cry out to Strongsoul. It was after the search-party had left the cave that they tied

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him up and told him to lie there and die. He heard confusedly the noise of the departure of the smugglers, but remembered nothing with distinctness from the time they bound him until Strongsoul untied him. His story ended, Saunders said, 'An' noo I think we should ging hame.'

Strongsoul stared at him in blank amazement. Were they not having adventures of a much more extraordinary kind than they had dared to hope for—at least until they came to the City of Destruction? And had not he, Saunders, already earned a high rank among pilgrims by his cruel sufferings? Saunders had forgotten that point of view and was staggered a little.

'But what's it a' tae end in?' he asked.

'End in!' cried Strongsoul; 'the Celestial City. But before that the Land of Beulah. We shall get there while we are still boys, and there we shall fall in love with beautiful girls and marry them,

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and, like Christiana's children, live there for a long time before crossing the river. Listen,' cried Strongsoul, and he opened his book and read :—

'After this I beheld until they were come into the Land of Beulah, where the sun shineth night and day. Here because they were weary they took themselves a while to rest. And because the country was common to pilgrims, and because the orchards and vineyards that were here belonged to the king of the Celestial country, therefore they were licensed to make bold with any of his things. But a little while soon refreshed them here; for the bells did so ring and the trumpets continually sound so melodiously that they could not sleep, and yet they received as much refreshing as if they had slept their sleep ever so soundly. Here also the noise of them that walked the streets was, More pilgrims have come to town! And another would answer, saying, And so many went over the water and were let in at the golden gates to-day! They would cry again, There is now a legion of shining

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ones just come to town, by which we know that there are more pilgrims upon the road; for here they come to wait for them, and to comfort them after their sorrow! Then the pilgrims got up and walked to and fro. But how were their ears now filled with heavenly voices, and their eyes delighted with celestial visions! In this land they heard nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing, smelt nothing, tasted nothing that was offensive to their stomach or mind; only when they tasted of the water of the river over which they were to go they thought that it tasted a little bitterish to the palate, but it proved sweet when it was down.

'In this place the children of the town would go into the king's gardens, and gather nosegays for the pilgrims, and bring them to them with much affection. Here also grew camphire with spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all the trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes with all chief spices. With these the pilgrims' chambers were perfumed while they stayed here; and with these were their bodies

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anointed to prepare them to go over the river when the time appointed was come.'

Strongsoul's voice thrilled through Saunders in this reading. His face shone, and his eyes burned so brightly that Saunders was ashamed to look at him.

'Will you come?' he said.

'I will,' replied Saunders.

Then they both lay down and slept, and dreamt of the Land of Beulah, and of beautiful little girls with golden hair and earnest blue eyes who brought them bunches of grapes and peaches, and sweet-smelling flowers; and when they awoke it was almost noon. They bathed themselves in the stream, ate the remainder of the provisions the goodwife had given them, and set out on their travels once more. They left the glen as soon as possible, and climbed to the shoulder of the hill. Looking south-east in the direction of the City of Destruction, they spied in the distance a large and fair building, which reminded Strongsoul of the Palace Beautiful.

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'It is certainly a palace,' he said. 'We will journey towards it.'

Straight across hill and dale they took their way, and as they went they talked.

'Saunders,' said Strongsoul, 'have you been thinking lately of Weights and Measures?'

'I gie ye my word,' said Saunders, 'they havena' crossed my mind sin' we met the giant. Twa mair days like yesterday an' I wouldna' ken the differ atween *Troy Weight* an' *Square Measure*.'

'We shall have many days like yesterday,' said Strongsoul; but seeing Saunders's face fall, he added, 'I mean as full of adventures — not that you'll ever suffer so much again.'

'Man, I canna' see what's the gude o' this sufferin'.'

'It's to make us strong and hardy, and enjoy the Land of Beulah and the Celestial City all the more when we come to them. All the good that's in people is brought

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out by their having to suffer—anyway it ought to be.'

'Eh, man!' cried Saunders. 'I've heard my granny say somethin' like that, but she'd little hope o' me. She used tae say I mindit her o' a proverb, "Mash snaw an' mask it, ye'll hae but water." She was aye hard on me, my granny.'

'I never had a granny,' said Strongsoul.

'Weel, ye needna' compleen. My granny has a rhyme that she's aye comin' owre—

> '"Gin ye're an anvil, haud ye still;
> Gin ye're a hammer, smite yer fill."

And she's been a hammer sin' I kenned her, an' a'body else is anvils.'

Strongsoul laughed at this, and told Saunders that he ought to be glad, because many pilgrims had to forsake people whom they liked a great deal better than he did his granny.

'Oh, but she's no a bad body, mind ye,' said Saunders. 'She kens a thing or

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twa, an' she's crouse eneuch tae, if she wouldna' be juist sae camstairie.'

'By-the-bye,' said Strongsoul, 'have you had any dreams?'

'Aboot a new name?'

'Yes.'

'Na; it's no likely, noo, that my name will be changed till we come to the City o' Destruction,' said Saunders. 'But dae ye think there's muckle truth in dreams?'

'All the dreams of pilgrims come true,' said Strongsoul.

'Dae they, man?'

'Oh yes!'

They were silent for a little. Then Saunders said, 'An' thae wee lassies in the Land o' Beuley.'

'What about them?'

'Man,' said Saunders with some hesitation, coming close up to Strongsoul, 'I dreamt aboot them.'

Now Strongsoul had dreamt about them too, but he only said, 'And what did you dream?'

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'Oh, no muckle; juist what you read. A lassie wi' gowden hair an' blue een cam' tae me cannily, an' gied me a flo'or an' a bunch o' grapes, an' smiled couthily, an' syne gaed awa' lookin' owre her shouther. An', man, she was bonny, an' I likit her, an' I never could be fashed wi' lassies afore. What dae ye think is the meanin' o' my dream?'

'I think it means that you will some day like girls.'

'Dae ye?'

'Yes.'

'Man, I'll be gled o' that; for they're bonny bit things — thae in the Land o' Beuley.

Then Strongsoul told his dream, which was pretty much like Saunders's; and they walked along arm-in-arm saying nothing, but with flushed faces thinking about the little blue-eyed girls in the Land of Beulah.

Hunger put an end to their day-dream. The palace was still a long way off, and Strongsoul's feet were tired and sore, for his boots had been dried in the sun

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till they were as hard as horn. He sank down, saying, 'I must have a rest.'

'An' I maun hae somethin' tae eat,' cried Saunders.

He climbed up a little higher than they were, but there was no house in sight except the palace. He saw that the way to it would be much shortened if they were to return to the road. So he hailed Strongsoul, who clambered up beside him, and agreed with him that they ought to get back to the highway. They both took off their boots and stockings, and found it very pleasant scampering down the hillside, the very idea of the change from the hill to the once-despised highway giving them new strength. Strongsoul felt particularly delighted at his own delight in getting back to the narrow way.

They found it much more agreeable than it had been the day before, because there were trees on both sides—fine old chestnuts whose branches met and made a roof as far as they could see. The sun came through in showers and spots and splashes.

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There was no wind, and the dust lay on the road like a thick Brussels carpet. They amused themselves by walking now in the sunshine, now in the shadow, the difference in the heat of the dust being always wonderful to them. A mile of this road, which did not tire them in the least, brought them to the porter's lodge. They washed their feet in a stream by the wayside and put on their boots, and tried to make themselves look as decent as possible. But Strongsoul's clothes were torn, and poor Saunders's, besides being torn, were very threadbare. Then their faces were black and blue and yellow and green with the blows they had given each other in their first encounter, and the knocks they had received in their fight with Grisly-beard. It was no wonder that the woman who came out of the porter's lodge as they entered the gate looked at them suspiciously. Strongsoul approached her quite unconscious of anything odd in his conduct or appearance — for pilgrims must become travel-stained and wayworn—and asked what was the name of the palace.

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'What'n a palace?' said the woman.

'Are you not the porteress?' asked Strongsoul.

The woman looked at them stupidly. Strongsoul then asked her if the porter was in. Again the woman made no reply, and Strongsoul, being at the end of his questions, turned from her and started up the avenue with Saunders. The woman gazed at them for a minute, and then ran after them, and seized Strongsoul by the collar and said, 'Ye canna go up.'

'How? We are pilgrims,' said Strongsoul.

'It doesna' matter. Ye canna go up.'

The woman looked very determined, but Strongsoul gave her the sixpence which the goodwife had given him. Amazed at receiving money from one whom she supposed a beggar, she let them go.

The avenue was long and uphill, and they were out of breath when they arrived at the courtyard. On entering it

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they found a great bustle; so busy was everybody that they were unnoticed for a time.

The palace was in two divisions, one old and one new; and there was a very magnificent terraced garden in front of it, which Strongsoul and Saunders couldn't enough admire. In it there was being erected a great white tent. Arches were going up in the courtyard and in the gateway, and garlands of flowers were being hung over doors and in windows. They saw a man going about very authoritatively, and they thought of addressing him, when a tall and dignified gentleman entered the courtyard from the modern building and talked to the authoritative individual, who listened with great humility. The dignified gentleman having given his instructions was about to retire when Strongsoul, with Saunders at his heels, stepped in his way.

'Sir,' said Strongsoul, 'are you the keeper of this palace?'

The dignified gentleman looked at the

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pilgrims impassively, and turned round as if to summon the authoritative individual, but he thought better of it and said coldly, 'I am, if you call it a palace.'

'Is it not a palace, then?' asked Strongsoul.

The dignified gentleman again turned towards the authoritative individual, who was watching the interview some yards off, evidently anticipating a summons to remove Strongsoul and Saunders; but again the gentleman changed his mind. Something in Strongsoul's face—something of earnestness, bordering on passion, for we know what a devoted pilgrim Strongsoul was—attracted him, so he said less coldly, 'This is Moredun Castle.'

'And are pilgrims entertained here?'

'What do you mean?'

'This is the pilgrim Saunders Elshander, and I am the pilgrim Strongsoul. We are on our way to the City of Destruction; and, sir, we have had nothing to eat except some bread and cheese since last night. We thought that this was a place

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for the refreshment of pilgrims, so we came here.'

During this little speech Saunders was doing his best to hide behind Strongsoul, but, being fully a foot taller, had no very great success. He watched the expression of the keeper's face, and was in the act of twitching Strongsoul's sleeve and running off when the keeper said, 'How long have you been pilgrims?'

'Since yesterday morning, sir.'

'And where do you come from?'

'From Dunmyatt.'

'But that's not so very far away. You can't have been all this time coming from Dunmyatt.'

'No, sir. We were taken captive by Giant Grislybeard, and Saunders was kept a prisoner all night.'

'Who is Giant Grislybeard? But come in.'

The keeper of the palace or castle preceded them, and led them through a great hall into a room full of books and pictures.

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'You are hungry, I think,' he said.

'Yes, sir,' said Strongsoul.

'You will have something to eat immediately.'

He was about to leave the room when a little girl entered. She stood stock-still with amazement on seeing the pilgrims, and they returned her gaze with intense interest. The little lady was not quite so tall as Strongsoul; she had beautiful golden hair and blue eyes, and in a basket which she carried were some lovely flowers.

'These are two pilgrims, Pansy,' said the keeper of the castle. 'They are on their way to the City of Destruction, and they are hungry, and we must give them something to eat.'

'Oh, papa!' cried Pansy. 'Pilgrims! Just like *The Pilgrim's Progress?*'

'It seems so,' said the keeper, with a smile.

'But it can't be,' said Pansy. 'Are you real and true pilgrims?' she said to Strongsoul.

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'Yes; we are pilgrims on our way through the City of Destruction to the Land of Beulah and the Celestial City,' said Strongsoul eagerly, and Pansy was convinced.

'How delightful!' she said. 'Oh, papa, let me look after them.'

'Very well. I hope you will excuse me,' said the keeper, turning to the pilgrims; 'I am very busy. My daughter will see that you are attended to.'

When the keeper had left the room, Pansy said, 'Now, what would you like to eat.'

'Just what you are in the habit of giving pilgrims,' said Strongsoul.

'But we have never had pilgrims before,' said Pansy. 'What would you like?' addressing Saunders.

'Weel, mem,' said Saunders with considerable diffidence, 'a cog o' parritch an' a bit ham an' egg would dae me.'

This was the height of luxury in eating hitherto attained by Saunders, and that on two occasions when he had breakfasted with

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his master, the grocer. He referred to it now because he wished to let the little lady know that he had some acquaintance with good living. Pansy lifted and laid one foot after the other like a little restive pony, and winked and flashed her eyes at the broad Scotch.

'I think I'll have to give you what there is to get. That'll be the best way,' she said.

'Verra weel, mem,' said Saunders. 'We're no ill tae please.'

'Do you always speak like that?' asked Pansy, for in her ears Saunders's speech was coarse and vulgar.

Saunders blushed and looked sheepish, and Pansy was sorry. She was about to speak when she noticed her flowers, and lifting a lily in her rosy hand, she gave it to Saunders, looking a sweet apology. Saunders couldn't speak, but he made a very low bow, unlike anything Pansy had ever seen, but not at all awkward, quite simple and expressive. She gave Strongsoul a red rose, beside which her rosy

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hand looked a lily; and Strongsoul did as Saunders had done, feeling that it was more beautiful to do so than to speak.

As Pansy left the room she looked over her shoulder and smiled. The moment she had gone Saunders and Strongsoul, sighing together a great long-pent sigh, turned and saw in one another's eyes that each had beheld his dream.

Pansy was some time in returning, because she found it difficult to get anybody to attend to her orders, so busy were they with their festive preparations; and then, when she had secured the services of a boy who knew more about the stable than the dining-room, her nurse laid hold of her and dressed her for riding. She rebelled at first, but nurse told her, knowing how much she loved her father, that he had been very particular in arranging that she should have her ride in spite of the turmoil in which the castle was: Pansy was a delicate girl, and was also the Lady Violet Moredun, daughter of the Duke of

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Moredun—his only child—and the doctor had ordered her to ride every day for her health. Her mother had been dead for several years, and the relations between father and daughter were most intimate and affectionate.

When Pansy got back to the pilgrims she burst out laughing. The table was spread, and the pilgrims sat at it, but neither of them had dared to touch anything. The boy who waited on them stood behind Saunders's chair with a cover in his hand and a napkin in his mouth to cork back the laughter. Pansy's laughter made him laugh out too—the pilgrims looked so ridiculous sitting there as stiff as pokers with their hands on their knees and faces of great solemnity, blushing at the beautiful plates and the silver knives and forks.

'You may go,' Pansy said to the servant, and he left the room.

'Eat, eat,' she said. 'I'm sure you're hungry. Eat a great lot—eat everything. Nobody will come here until I return

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from my ride.' She swept out of the room in her riding-habit like the little lady she was.

Saunders and Strongsoul tried to follow the instructions of Pansy, but failed to do anything more than diminish slightly the good things provided for them. Having eaten as much as they could, and more than was good for them, they looked out of the window and watched the bustle in the garden. An hour passed, and they were beginning to be restless when they noticed a commotion. All the servants and workmen rushed up the terrace, evidently making for the court-yard. The pilgrims, fearing that something had happened to Pansy, ran out of the castle to learn what was the matter.

The groom who had ridden with Pansy stood, frightened and breathless, in the centre of a crowd telling the duke something. The pilgrims pushed forward within hearing, and the duke said, as the groom finished his story, 'I don't understand you.'

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He was very white, and he would have fallen had not a gentleman who stood beside him caught him in his arms. The gentleman was Lord Francis Learmont, the duke's brother.

'What is it?' said the duke to the groom. 'Tell me again.'

Then the groom told how the Lady Violet had ridden along a favourite road of hers which led out of the policies into a great wood; how, shortly after they had entered the wood, his horse shrieked and fell, and he himself was clutched by two men and his eyes bandaged, but not before he had seen the Lady Violet's horse fall also, and two other men lay hold of her; how he had been held there for some time and then dragged away into the wood and left lying in a thicket with his hands tied; how he managed to slip his hands out of the rope, and after some searching had found his way back to the road, where both horses lay hamstrung; and how he had then run straight to the castle without a halt.

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'It can't be,' said the duke. 'It's impossible. Such things aren't done nowadays.'

The groom called God to witness that it was true: the horses were there in the road to prove it.

Strongsoul waited to hear no more. He pulled Saunders by the sleeve, and they moved out of the crowd.

'Get the pillowslip,' said Strongsoul.

Saunders ran into the house and brought it.

The lowest room in the old tower was an armoury, and the door of it stood open. Strongsoul went in and took two naked swords. These he wrapped in the pillowslip, and, followed by the wondering Saunders, set off running to the highway. At first they ran so quickly that Saunders for lack of breath could put no question, but when they had to slacken their pace he inquired where they were going.

'To the cave,' said Strongsoul. 'This is Grislybeard's work.'

'Hoo dae ye ken?' said Saunders.

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'I don't know how I know, but I know.'

Saunders felt that there was nothing more to be said, so he took the pillow-slip from Strongsoul to give him a rest, and they marched along together with white, resolute faces. As soon as they were out of the highway Strongsoul took the pillowslip and threw it away, and they went up the glen sword in hand. To Saunders's surprise they had not the least difficulty in finding the road; but Strongsoul was not at all astonished, for he knew that the steps of pilgrims, when they are on an enterprise such as they had undertaken, are specially directed.

Strongsoul made Saunders keep at some distance behind him as they drew near the cave, so that if one were taken the other might escape; but they arrived at the cleft without meeting anyone. The tree was down, and on going up the glen a little way they saw that the windlass had been placed on the platform. By this they knew that Grislybeard and his

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men were in the cave — with Pansy, Strongsoul was certain.

'What'll we dae noo?' asked Saunders.

'Go down the glen and hide behind a tree. If Grislybeard hasn't found out your escape by this time he will soon, and then he will know that the inner cave has been discovered.'

'An' what then?'

'Then they'll leave the cave. Don't you see?'

'An' what'll we dae?'

'Attack them as they pass.'

'A' richt,' said Saunders, flourishing his sword.

Just then sounds came from the platform, so they hurried down the glen and got in behind some alder bushes. In a few minutes they heard the footsteps of a man approaching.

'You jump out behind him. I'll jump in front of him,' said Strongsoul. 'Stop! One—two—three!' and the man was between the points of their swords.

'Stand!' cried Strongsoul; but there

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was no need, for the man stood still enough in the utmost amazement.

'Have they discovered the escape of Saunders?'

No answer.

'Have they discovered the escape of Saunders?'

Still no answer.

'Speak, or I'll run you through.'

At this moment Saunders in his excitement pricked the man in the back. He writhed and was in the act of crying out, but Strongsoul touched him on the breast, saying, 'And if you shout I'll run you through.'

'What do you want?' said the man angrily.

'Speak quietly, or I'll run you through,' said Strongsoul.

Again Saunders unintentionally pricked him, and the man wheeled about.

'What do you mean?' he cried.

'I'll rin ye through,' said Saunders.

Then Strongsoul in his turn pricked him in the back, and he span round with a curse.

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'You're to talk to me,' said Strongsoul. 'Have they discovered the escape of Saunders?'

'Yes.'

'Where are you going?'

'To my house.'

'What for?'

'My supper.'

'That's not true.'

Saunders raised his eyebrows; Strongsoul nodded, and the man got another prick in the back. If it had been planned and rehearsed it couldn't have been more prompt.

'Every time you tell a lie you'll be jagged in the back,' said Strongsoul. 'What are you going home for?'

'For a pick and spade,' said the man surlily.

'What are you going to do with them?'

'I'm going to dig.'

'Dig what?'

'Potatoes.'

'With a pick!' said Strongsoul, nod-

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ding to Saunders, who at once stuck the point of his sword into the man for the fourth time. He was in the act of turning round when Strongsoul pricked him in the right arm.

'Every time you turn round I'll jag you,' said Strongsoul.

The man sank down on the ground swearing terribly. Had he been courageous, at the expense of a cut or two he could have overcome both boys; but he recognised Saunders, and he guessed who Strongsoul was, and feared him, knowing how he had attacked Grislybeard and foiled the giantess.

'What are you going to do with the pick and spade?' asked Strongsoul.

'Dig a grave.'

'Whose grave?'

The man was silent for a second or two; then he said, 'Jenny's.'

'Who's Jenny?'

'The boss's wife.'

'Oh, Mrs Grislybeard!'

Strongsoul nodded, and Saunders quickly

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performed his part. The man sprang to his feet, but in doing so he received the points of both swords and sank to the ground again.

'Whose grave?'

'The Lady Violet Moredun's.'

'Is she dead?'

'No; she's to be killed when I come back.'

'Why is she to be killed? Come, tell the whole story or we'll kill you.'

'Lord Francis Learmont,' said the man, squeezing the words out, 'will be the duke's sole heir when the Lady Violet's out of the way. He's given five hundred pounds to us to do the job. Her throat's to be cut, and she's to be buried up there, and we're all to cut to America — that is, us four. There's other two that don't know anything about it, and if the body's found they'll get the blame. It's the safest thing ever done if it weren't for you.' The man cursed them again and again.

'How many men are there in the cave just now?'

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'Three.'

'That makes four with you; but there were five last night.'

'Ay, but he's not in the secret. We had to set the still a-going last night on his account, curse him. Even with that he suspected something.'

'Get up and take off your coat and hat.'

The man did so, and Strongsoul slipped them on without putting his arms into the sleeves of the coat. Having ordered Saunders to his side he said to the man, 'If you speak or move without my orders we'll both plunge our swords into you. Forward.'

A yard from the cleft Strongsoul halted them. He went into the entrance and made the man stand behind him with the point of Saunders's sword touching the back of his neck.

'You're to whistle,' said Strongsoul, 'and when they answer cry out, "Take me up at once; there are people in the glen." But if you let the tip of your nose be seen, Saunders will run you through.'

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The prisoner whistled thrice and the answer came. When the men appeared above Strongsoul looked up, having the hat pulled down over his brows and shading his face with his hand. The prisoner shouted as he had been instructed, and the cage came down at once. Strongsoul jumped in and they drew him up. The moment he reached the platform he threw off the coat and hat, and springing out of the cage stabbed one of the men in the side. He fell shrieking. The other turned and ran, but Strongsoul followed him, and making up on him drove his sword through his right thigh so that he also fell with a prolonged shriek, for Strongsoul had some difficulty in withdrawing the blade. When his sword was free he ran forward and met Grislybeard at the entrance of the cave. The giant was armed with a heavy iron bar.

'You? Ha, ha! I've got ye now!' he cried, heaving up his weapon.

Strongsoul rushed in under the blow and received the bar on his left shoulder, but

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so near the giant's hand that he hardly felt it; at the same time he cut the giant's left leg and got past him into the cave. He looked about, but he could not see the duke's daughter. She had crept behind the water-barrel.

'Pansy!' he cried.

She looked out, and recognising Strongsoul, ran towards him.

'Oh, dear pilgrim,' she said, 'take me home!'

'I will,' said Strongsoul. 'Stand back and watch the fight.'

She ran to a corner and falling on her knees clasped her hands and prayed.

Grislybeard bore down on Strongsoul, swinging the bar with great rapidity from side to side. Strongsoul could see no way of getting at him, and retreated slowly. The giant's intention was to force him against a wall, and press the breath out of him. This Strongsoul perceived, and keeping his eyes fixed on the giant's, sprang up into the air about half his own height. This action had just the effect he intended. The

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giant, surprised for a second, ceased swinging his bar, and Strongsoul, darting in, wounded him so severely in the right hand that he let his weapon drop. It was now the giant's turn to retreat. He ran in behind the water-barrel and Strongsoul after him. They went round the barrel and the fireplace several times until the giant, who was fleeter than Strongsoul, had put such a distance between them that he had time to stoop and pick up one of the stones of the fireplace. With this he ran to one side of the cave and stood at bay.

'Come on!' he cried, holding the stone above his head with both hands.

Strongsoul moved towards him warily, but without flinching. The blood was streaming from the wound in the giant's hand, and he felt his strength giving way. He determined, therefore, to strike while he had still the power to direct his huge missile. Strongsoul paused in his advance, measuring the distance between the giant and himself. His plan was to run at Grislybeard as soon as he dis-

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charged the stone, avoiding it as he had avoided the stroke of the bar. Suddenly the giant, with a shout, took two steps forward and hurled the piece of rock with all his force; and Strongsoul fell. But the giant's aim had been unsteady. The stone barely grazed the back of Strongsoul's head, and although his shoulders caught it a little more heavily he was unhurt. The giant stumbled down on him before he could rise and seized his throat—not with any great force, for he thought Strongsoul had received the full weight of the stone and would give him little more trouble. He grinned hideously as he said, 'You'll catch it now, my man, if there's any life in you.' Just as he said that Strongsoul passed his sword through the giant's body, and with a long-drawn howl, ending in a groan, Grislybeard rolled over dead. Then Strongsoul rose, and seizing him by the hair of the head raised his sword to strike; but Pansy, running from her corner, caught his arm.

'What are you going to do?' she said.

'Cut off his head.'

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'Oh, don't do that!'

'Why not? Greatheart always did it when he killed a giant, and an angel told me in a dream that I was to be equal to Greatheart. There are two more in the passage,' said Strongsoul, his eyes blazing with triumph. 'I'll cut off their heads too.'

'But they're not dead,' said Pansy, pointing to the door of the cave.

Strongsoul looked, and saw where the two wounded men stood bleeding against the wall with ghastly faces.

'Then I must kill them,' he said.

'For God's sake don't!' both men cried feebly.

'Oh, pilgrim, you must be merciful!' said Pansy.

'Well,' said Strongsoul magnanimously, not altogether liking the idea of an attack on two wounded and defenceless men, 'I'll not kill them; but I mean to cut off the giant's head,' and he twisted Grislybeard's hair round his wrist.

'I'll never speak to you if you do,' said Pansy.

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Strongsoul gazed at Pansy, and Pansy gazed at him. Slowly he let go the giant's hair, and wiped the blood from his sword on the giant's clothes.

'Take me home,' said Pansy, turning away.

With a sigh and a lingering look at the giant's head, Strongsoul took Pansy's hand and led her to the entrance.

'Go in,' he said to the wounded men.

Supporting each other they limped with many groans to the box on which the water-barrel stood, and leaning against it sat down on the ground. They then tried to attend to each other's wounds.

'They are suffering,' said Strongsoul compassionately. 'Would it not be better to kill them and put them out of their pain?'

'No,' said Pansy. 'Let us be quick and send them a doctor.'

With some reluctance Strongsoul assented to this. He remembered how the giant had taken down Mrs Grislybeard, but he was at a loss how to regulate the speed of the de-

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scent. Not for long, however. He found a rope in a corner, and made a loop on each end of it. These he put over the handles of the windlass, and holding the rope tightly, was able to control in a measure the revolution of the cylinder. The last few feet they came down with a run, for the rope gave out, but neither were hurt.

'Hoo mony hae ye kill't?' were the first words Saunders said.

'Only one.'

'That'll be twa then, for I think I've kill't this one. He thocht he could win owre me, an' I had tae run him through.'

But the man said he was not dead.

'We'll send you a doctor, then,' said Strongsoul.

'I hope yer leddyship's nane the waur?' said Saunders to Pansy.

'I'm afraid I am,' she said. 'Shall we be long in getting home?'

'Not long,' said Strongsoul cheerfully. 'Come, we'll help you.'

With some diffidence Pansy slipped her arms into the pilgrims'. The rough road

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soon made her hold tight and lean hard, and by the time they got to the highway she was laughing and chattering as if they had been returning from a holiday.

Whom should they meet almost as soon as they got to the road but some of the search-party of the night before, including the gruff-voiced leader.

'Here she is!' he cried.

Besides the search-party there were other people in the road, and a crowd was immediately formed round Pansy and the pilgrims.

'Stand aside!' said Strongsoul, raising his sword, but Pansy touched his arm and told him that these were friends.

'That we are,' said the gruff-voiced man; 'all of us. Everybody round about is searching for you, my lady.'

'It's very kind of them,' said Pansy. 'How can we get to Moredun Castle?'

'I've a spring-cart,' said the man eagerly, 'if your ladyship 'll condescend to use it.'

'Oh, thank you!' cried Pansy. 'I'll only be too glad.'

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'It's this way,' said the man, pointing to a stile.

Pansy and the pilgrims crossed the road.

'Are these little rascals coming too?' said the man.

Before Pansy could answer, Strongsoul struck him over the shoulders with the flat of his sword.

'Don't call people rascals without knowing them,' he said.

'I declare,' said the man, rubbing his shoulder, 'it's the kelpie! And is this another?' he asked, pointing to Saunders.

'These are the young gentlemen that saved my life,' said Pansy. 'They are pilgrims, and they are going back with me to Moredun. There are three wounded men at the cave in the glen,' she added, addressing some of those who stood about. 'You must get a doctor and go to them—and a policeman too, I think.'

Headed by three of the members of the old search-party, a crowd set off up the glen in obedience to Pansy, while one or

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two went to the village of Moredun for the doctor.

The gruff-voiced man's house not being very far off, he soon had his cart yoked, and they got into it without delay. They took a back road, and saw no one until they arrived at the castle.

Strongsoul helped Pansy down, and she took his arm and Saunders's and walked into the hall. There was only one footman to be seen, because all the other servants were either engaged searching for Pansy, or in the kitchen or in attendance in other rooms. The footman gazed in amazement, especially at the swaggering gait of the gruff-voiced man, who had followed the others into the castle. Pansy heard him behind her, and, turning, said, 'I thank you very much. Papa will see you afterwards. Jones, will you take him to the servants' room?'

The gruff-voiced man, rather crestfallen, had to go away with the footman, while Pansy led Strongsoul and Saunders to the drawing-room. When they entered it the

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pilgrims drew in their breath and turned giddy with astonishment. It was a long, broad, high-ceiled room, and the splendour of it such as neither of them had ever imagined. A number of ladies and gentlemen stood in it, and one lady dressed in black sat near a window. To her the duke, who could hardly stand, he was so shaken with grief, had just finished telling of the abduction of his daughter when Pansy and the pilgrims entered.

'My lord duke,' said the lady, rising, 'you are a brave man. You have stayed to welcome me when your heart was wrung with this great anguish. I shall never forget it, and I thank you from my heart. Go now: I shall not expect to see you again until you have found my sweet little Pansy.'

As the lady said this she saw Pansy and the pilgrims at the end of the room. She took a step forward and, touching the shoulder of the duke, whose eyes were bent on the ground as he bowed profoundly, pointed to the three children.

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The duke turned, and, forgetting in whose presence he was, ran to Pansy and clasped her in his arms with a great sobbing cry. He kissed her over and over, and led her to the lady.

Pansy kissed the lady's hand and the lady kissed her on the cheek. Then Pansy, moving backwards, took the pilgrims by the hands and led them to the lady.

'This is the pilgrim Strongsoul,' said Pansy.

Strongsoul knelt down, and the lady gave him her hand.

'This is the pilgrim Saunders Elshander,' said Pansy.

Saunders knelt beside Strongsoul, and the lady gave him her hand also.

'Rise, good pilgrims,' said the lady, very much amused and interested.

Strongsoul and Saunders rose, and picking up their swords, which they had laid on the floor when they knelt, stood on either side of Pansy. All the ladies and gentlemen gathered round, excited and curious.

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The lady looked at the duke, and the duke looked at Pansy, and Pansy said, 'If you please, your majesty, it is a long story. May I tell it?'

And the lady said, 'Yes.'

Then Pansy told everything that had happened to herself, and everything that Saunders and Strongsoul had done for her; and when she came to the death of Grislybeard everybody started.

The lady said to Strongsoul, 'Do you think it was right to kill this man?'

'Yes,' said Strongsoul.

'Why?'

'Because if I hadn't killed him he would have killed me, and because he was bad.'

'Would you kill everybody who is bad?'

'No,' said Strongsoul. 'Only those who will not let others be good, and who are the enemies of pilgrims.'

'But what if you have committed murder?' said the lady.

'Murder?' said Strongsoul dubiously.

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'If Greatheart was a murderer, so am I.'

'I acquit you,' said the lady, smiling.

Then Pansy finished her story, and the lady looked at both pilgrims with great admiration.

'Give me your sword,' she said to Strongsoul. 'You are a brave and noble boy,' said the lady when she had the sword. 'I wish you to be a brave and noble man. What is your name?'

'Strongsoul.'

'And what is your first name?'

'That is all my name.'

'Surely not.'

Strongsoul told the lady the dream he had dreamt on the side of Dunmyatt, and the lady was charmed with him.

She talked in whispers for a minute or two with the duke, then she handed back the sword to Strongsoul, and taking a ring from her finger put it on his hand, saying, 'Since you have no first name you shall be my Lord Strongsoul of Dunmyatt, and

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when you are a man you may perhaps sit in the House of Lords and help to govern my people.'

Strongsoul bent low, and Pansy, with her eyes dancing, came and kissed him.

'And what is your name?' said the lady to Saunders.

'Saunders Elshander, mem.'

'Give me your sword, Saunders, and kneel down.'

Then the lady struck him on the shoulders with his sword, and said, 'Rise, Sir Saunders Elshander;' and Sir Saunders jumped up, and the lady gave him his sword again. Pansy did not kiss Saunders, but she pressed his hand very warmly.

'And now, my lord,' said the lady to the duke, 'do you know who has done or instigated this thing?'

The duke did not know; but Lord Strongsoul told the lady what he had heard about Lord Francis Learmont.

'Where is Lord Francis?' said the lady.

'He is leading the search,' said the

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duke, who seemed even more distressed at the news of his brother than he had been at the abduction of Pansy.

'Let Lord Francis Learmont come to me as soon as he returns,' said the lady.

Then they all went to dinner. The lady made Lord Strongsoul of Dunmyatt and Sir Saunders Elshander sit on her right hand and on her left, and she talked to them during the dinner about their pilgrimage. Now the lady knew *The Pilgrim's Progress* quite well, and so she said to them, 'My Lord Strongsoul of Dunmyatt and Sir Saunders Elshander, as you know, I am the queen of these countries, and I also am a pilgrim. I have, therefore, a great interest in the welfare of all pilgrims, and I wish very much that your pilgrimage should be successful. If you remember, in *The Pilgrim's Progress* there are no boys who travel alone; they are either in the company of their parents, or of a guardian like Greatheart. Now there are erected

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in most of the towns in my dominions Interpreters' Houses, called schools and colleges, where young people, whether they have parents or not, are prepared for pilgrimage, and I have been thinking that, if you are willing, it would be wise of you to have the instructions of one of these Interpreters before going farther.'

Strongsoul bowed, and Saunders, who took the cue from him, did likewise. Saunders expected Strongsoul to say something, but as his leader kept silence he ventured a remark of his own.

'Mem,' he said, 'my faither's a shepherd, an' forbye that, as my granny says, ye micht as weel try tae shave an egg as get a bawbee oot o' him if he can keep it at all.'

The lady smiled graciously on Saunders, and he was about to follow up what he deemed a brilliant beginning with some more family matters and quotations from his granny—for he was anxious to go to college, and wished to explain that he would require help—when the lady en-

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gaged the duke in conversation, and Saunders did not find another opportunity of stating his mind.

'Saunders,' whispered Strongsoul, as they passed along a corridor after dinner, 'follow me.'

With some difficulty Strongsoul found the way to the courtyard. There he addressed Saunders very severely.

'I am ashamed of you,' he began; but he got no further, for at that moment the fathers of the pilgrims appeared and led them home.

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THE GLASGOW GHOSTS

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The Glasgow Ghosts

PHILIP MARQUIS arrived in Glasgow one autumn night some years ago, having walked a distance of thirty miles without tasting food. He was in evening dress. but wore a soft hat. He had no money. He lounged about the streets till midnight, hunger gnawing his vitals like a rat. About a minute from twelve he sat down with his back against the hotel in the passage between St Enoch Square and Dunlop Street. He pulled up his knees to his chin, clasped his hands round them, pressed himself tightly together, and groaned. Eighteen hours without food! His six feet, his broad shoulders, his curly beard, mattered nothing; he groaned, and would, I believe, have sobbed, but twelve o'clock

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struck. His hunger vanished, his pain ceased. His mind seemed to grow preternaturally clear. A pleasing sensation spread through his body. He saw a radiance approach, and a slight fog which filled the air whistled past as the light came on. The light became a figure, and stopped before him. He knew it was a ghost, yet he felt no fear. He had never, even as a boy, believed in ghosts; but he knew that this was one.

He rose, helping himself up with his hands, for he felt very weak, and made a polite bow. The ghost took a step back, and went through a most graceful and elaborate salute, and then said, with much surprise and in a voice like that with which the ventriloquist represents someone talking in the chimney, 'It is most unaccountable, sir, that you should be able to see me.'

'Oh, I am not blind,' said Philip.

'Nay, if you had been blind, I would not have wondered. Pray, sir, pardon me, but have you been drinking?'

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This was a ghost, and might be allowed liberties. So Philip replied civilly that he had not.

'Then, sir — it is very material, or I would not ask—are you in delirium tremens?'

'I am not, and never was,' said Philip. 'But what have these questions got to do with my seeing you?'

'This, sir, that in all my experience as a ghost, which extends over a period of more than a hundred years, I have not met a man of your sanguine-bilious complexion who has been able to see one of us, except in his cups, or in the horrors, or in bad health. I perceive that none of these causes give you the second sight; and I protest, sir, that I am hugely interested to know whence you have the gift.'

The ghost took a pinch of snuff out of a large gold snuff-box, and meditated for a minute. Philip, whose attention had been directed exclusively to the face of the apparition now examined it from top to toe.

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It wore its own hair powdered, and carried its little three-cornered laced hat under its left arm. Its eyes were blue and phosphorescent, but not at all repulsive. Its nose was hooked, but a large good-humoured mouth took from the hawkish expression of that feature. There was a pale pink tinge on its cheeks and on its lips; but the rest of its face, and its neck and hands, were of a waxy, semi-transparent whiteness. It wore a green silk coat with gold facings, and its knee-breeches were of the same material and hue. Its stockings were of white silk, and fitted exquisitely as tight a leg as ever stepped up the gallows ladder. The shoes had gold buckles and red reels. It wore no waist-coat, and its ruffled shirt of the finest cambric was open at the neck. Two gold-mounted pistols were stuck in a belt worn sailor-wise; and a long rapier with a gold hilt, but without a scabbard, hung at its side. These arms and articles of dress appeared to have undergone a change like that of their wearer. They were perfectly visible to Philip; but the whole apparition had an

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aloof, impalpable air about it, not by any means ghostly, however, as that word is commonly understood.

At the end of about two minutes, having quickened his wits with snuff, six times administered in a manner so graceful, delicate and noiseless, as to be not only an apology, but almost a reason for that method of taking tobacco, the ghost, with an elegant bow, presented his box to Philip, saying at the same time, 'I am, sir, exceedingly loath to incur your resentment; but, if you will pledge me your honour not to be offended, I shall hazard a guess as to the reason of your being able to see me, which, I think, will pretty nearly hit the mark.

Philip, whose interest and amusement had overcome every other feeling, replied graciously, 'I imagine such a refined gentleman as you most undoubtedly are, could not, without doing a greater outrage to himself than to me, utter a single word that could be construed as insolent.'

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The ghost bowed and simpered a little in a manly way, while Philip helped himself to a pinch of snuff from the box, which was received back by its owner with another engaging bow.

'I protest,' said the ghost, taking a seventh and prodigious pinch, 'I protest, sir, that I do not design it as a reflection upon your character as a gentleman, or your position in the world; but from certain shrewd signs that I remember to have observed in myself during the first period of my life, and which I now notice in you, I conclude that it is some time since you broke your fast; indeed, sir, if you will permit me to say it, I fancy you are starving.'

Philip wondered why the ghost should be so delicate in the matter of hunger, and so frank in that of drunkenness; but, ascribing the difference to the custom of the age in which the ghost had worn flesh, or to some rule of spiritual etiquette, he was about to acknowledge his wretched condition, when a fit of sneezing seized him. The snuff, of which he had taken a good

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pinch, was of peculiar pungency, and, when thoroughly moistened, stung his nose like a nettle. He sneezed for two minutes, each paroxysm pealing so loudly that the very stars seemed to wink. When the fit left him he said, 'It is true; I am dying of hunger. I haven't eaten for eighteen hours.'

'Good heavens!' cried the ghost, in the greatest consternation.

Without another word he grasped Philip's right hand, and led him away towards the west end of the city at a pace of extraordinary rapidity, which caused him not the least uneasiness, for contact with the ghost seemed to endow him with some ethereal strength. After they had gone a mile or two, the ghost slackened the pace, and addressed Philip abruptly in the following terms,—

'Sir, the power by which you are able to see me arises from the reduction in your animal strength caused by your long abstinence from food. Your spirit thereby, like air relieved from pressure, has risen up-

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right out of the bent and blinding posture in which it is usually confined by your coffin.'

'My coffin!'

'Good sir,' said the ghost, with courteous haste, 'we spirits call bodies coffins! But, sir, allow me, as we are about to enter the presence of a number of goodly ghosts—my friends—to allay in a measure the curiosity which I plainly perceive almost equals your hunger. I will let you know everything about ourselves that ghosts are permitted to tell the coffined. And, to begin with, let me inform you that, at this present moment, the number of people in Glasgow having intercourse of some nature with ghosts of all ages, from five thousand years to one second, must be between six and seven thousand. You will be astonished at this; but you must understand that it is very seldom a true ghost-seer ever publishes his visions, even to the wife of his bosom; because, without getting special permission from a ghost, the flesh-trammelled soul cannot recount what he sees and hears

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in our company. Besides, few know to ask this licence, and it is taken away from those to whom it is granted on the least deviation from the truth, or heightening of colour in what they say of us.'

'Give me this power!' cried Philip.

'It is yours; but many things that you see and hear you will be unable to recall. Well, sir, my name is Hugh Rawhead, and my wife is Lady Dolly Dimity. You do not know these names, though the latter was once famous in fashionable circles, and the former noted on the highway, and canonised in the Newgate Calendar. My lady and I are living at present in an elegantly furnished house in Gordon Terrace. Its tenant has been out of Glasgow since the beginning of June. Dolly and I came to it in August. We are English ghosts, but prefer to live in Scotland, because England is so changed since our time that we have no comfort living there. Scotland we didn't know in our former existence, and, though the effects of progress often shock us even here, it is vastly pleasanter than in England. Why,

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sir, in that woeful country, my father's grave has been built over; and I have a friend, a Yorkshire ghost, who saw his own tombstone built into a dyke—a dry dyke, sir!'

'Atrocious!' said Philip.

'Monstrous, my good sir, monstrous! But,' continued the ghost, increasing the pace at which they proceeded, to use an indefinite term for a notion hardly describable, 'I will not keep you from satisfying your hunger any longer, as I see you are getting fainter. You will not be surprised, then, at my servants and guests, who are all ghosts. I have three couples on a visit to me at present. The gentlemen were all highwaymen like myself. There is Tony Trippet and his wife, Mirabel Dufresnoy, who was a nun at Rouen; Will Wannion and his wife, the Duchess of Danskerville, who, you may remember, eloped with her husband's second gardener; and Robert Blacklock and his wife, Jemima Jenkinson, who was a Methodist preacher. I am sure they will all make you welcome, and here we are.'

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A footman of the most aristocratic appearance ushered Philip and his friend into a large dining-room, where the lady and gentlemen ghosts whose names Mr Rawhead had mentioned, all dressed in costumes of the last century, sat round a supper-table.

'Ha! Mr Rawhead,' said Lady Dolly Dimity in tones of muffled sweetness, 'how late you are!'

'My dear life,' replied Mr Rawhead, 'I would have been to the minute had I not required to accommodate my pace to this gentleman's, whose name I have not yet inquired.'

Philip announced himself, and Mr Rawhead's guests were introduced to him, and shook hands with him cordially. A peculiar lukewarmth in his own hand was the only sensation conveyed by their grasp. Supper was served immediately. The food set before the ghosts was wholly liquid; but Philip was too intent on the solids supplied to himself to observe further the nature of the spiritual repast. When his hunger was sufficiently appeased to allow of his looking

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about him, the others had all supped, or rather drunk, and sat watching him with a placid expression of pleasure.

'Mr Marquis,' said Rawhead, 'if you can now give me your attention, I will let you know how I came to be walking about the streets to-night.'

'I shall be most happy,' said Philip, 'to know the cause of my good fortune.'

'All who have been pronounced criminals,' continued the ghost, 'on entering the world of spirits have this duty laid upon them—to roam up and down in search of people about to commit crime for the purpose of dissuading them from their evil purposes. This is done by acting secretly on their consciences, and, in cases where it is possible, by a monitory whisper or apparition. When I met you I was returning from preventing a burglary in Dennistoun, and several petty larcenies in the Gallowgate. I am glad to have been the means of saving you from starving, and if I can help you in any other way I shall esteem it a privilege. Lafayette, you may go.'

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Philip turned and saw a magnificent lacquey leave the room. There could be no mistake. This was none other than 'the sublime hero of two worlds, Grandison-Cromwell-Lafayette.'

'To what base uses!' he exclaimed.

'Ah! you are astonished,' said Rawhead. 'But you must understand that, just as we villains are engaged in preventing evil, so misers occupy themselves in suggesting charity to rich men; philosophers in amusing themselves; epic poets in helping sub-editors; theologians in learning about God; and those who in the flesh were of haughty natures, in serving spirits who were more humble-minded. Lafayette is the best servant we ever had. Is he not, Dolly?'

'He is, indeed, my dear,' replied Lady Dimity. 'We got him as soon as he died, Mr Marquis; and very glad of him we were, I can tell you, although we were dubious about taking him.'

'How so?' asked Philip.

'Oh well, you know, sir, when the French Revolution began, we were perfectly deluged

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with serving ghosts, on account of the number of aristocrats sent us. Capital domestics they were and are; but in a little while all kinds of low-mannered French fellows, who, although not well born, had been of the haughtiest natures, plagued us in shoals, until the very name of Frenchman made us shudder.'

'Do you remember Robespierre, my love?' asked Rawhead.

'I'll never forget him till my dying day!' cried Lady Dolly. 'Oh, the stiff, awkward brute!'

'I hear,' said the Duchess of Danskerville, 'that he has been engaged by Louis XVI. as boots.'

'This is extraordinary!' cried Philip. 'Can you tell me anything of Marie Antoinette?'

'Certainly, sir,' said Mirabel Dufresnoy. 'She is the most fashionable milliner to the ghosts in Paris, and she is married, I believe, to a Highland laird, who goes out as a waiter.'

'And Louis XVI.?'

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'Oh!' said the French lady, 'he and an English puritaness who sailed in the *Mayflower* keep house together.'

'Mr Marquis,' said Jemima Jenkinson in a solemn voice, 'I, who talked so much formerly, never open my lips now except to the point. When you join us for good, you will find yourself besieged by crowds of serving ghosts. Of all these the most forward will be a little, stout, unencumbered, olive-complexioned spirit, who, it seems, created a great disturbance in his time. His name is Napoleon Bonaparte. He is engaged and discharged almost every day. All new unsophisticated arrivals to whom he offers himself, generally as butler, snap him up with avidity, thinking themselves highly honoured. But I don't believe he ever remained in a place longer than three hours. He is the most incompetent, absent-minded, stumbling, blundering creature imaginable. And the best of it all is, the wretch is so anxious to please, and looks at one with such a pathetic, dog-like gaze when he fails, that nobody has the heart to rate him; and his

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employers dismiss him with a most excellent character, giving as a reason for discontinuing his services that they are ashamed to be waited on by such a great spirit.'

Philip thanked Jemima, and promised to profit by her warning.

'Dear me!' exclaimed Lady Dimity, looking at her watch, 'how late it is! I must go and see to my children.'

She went to the nursery, while the other ladies retired to the drawing-room. Then Philip, with a face and accent expressive of the greatest wonder, said to Mr Rawhead, 'I thought there was no marrying nor giving in marriage there!'

'Ah, but, my dear sir, you see we are not "there" yet,' replied Mr Rawhead, smiling good-naturedly.

'And Lady Dimity's children! Are they —are they—'

'Are they what, sir?'

'Were they born since she died?'

'Most assuredly, my good sir. She is my wife, sir—my affinity. It is the first thing ghosts do, to seek out their affinities.

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Sometimes mistakes occur, as you may conceive, many spirits being alike in character.'

'And what takes place when an error is made?'

'A duel, as a rule, which results in the death of one or other of the parties.'

'Death?' gasped Philip.

'Ay; did you think ghosts lived for ever?'

'But you said there were ghosts five thousand years old.'

'Quite true. The ghosts of most of the antediluvians and many of the patriarchs still survive; but the average life of a ghost since the beginning of the Christian era is five hundred years. Adam and Eve are still alive, and hearty as ever. It is expected that they will live till the end of the world.'

'Is Cain alive?' asked Philip.

'No; he and Abel departed in the end of last century. After having had a great many wives, they both conceived the notion that their true affinity was Charlotte Cor-

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day. They fought a whole week about her, with intervals for refreshment, and they both died of the wounds they gave each other.'

'And what became of Charlotte Corday?'

'She and Jephthah's daughter, desperate of ever getting husbands, have founded a sort of nunnery for ladies similarly situated. It is said that Charlotte would like Cromwell, but Judith won't give him up.'

Philip was so overpowered by these revelations that he was silent for a while. During the pause Will Wannion hummed a song, and Tony Trippet drummed time to it on the table; Bobby Blacklock thoughtlessly picked his clean teeth; Rawhead polished his pistols; and all four ghosts snuffed industriously.

At length Philip said, 'Where do ghosts go when they die?'

'Nobody knows,' replied Rawhead.

'Do they ever reappear?' pursued Philip.

'No, no! There is still a talk in some quarters of the spirits of ghosts reappear-

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ing, but it is the remnant of a foolish superstition.'

'The purest humbug,' said Trippet.

This is all that is known of Philip Marquis and the ghosts.

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THE SCHOOLBOY'S TRAGEDY

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The Schoolboy's Tragedy

THE room was large and well ventilated, but a hundred children on a warm day in the middle of June had made it close in half-an-hour. Mr Haggle, the head-master, doled out with dull recapitulation a lesson in grammar. Now and again he whipped a boy to rouse his own flagging energies, and as a check on the general drowsiness. Returning to his desk after one of these well-timed onslaughts, he noticed a suspicious closing of a book on the part of Jenny Stewart, who was that day the dux of the girls.

'Girl Stewart, stand. Come here.'

Scholars under Mr Haggle's charge were never addressed by their Christian names; and as boys and girls were taught to-

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gether, in speaking to individuals Mr Haggle, in his own phrase, 'prefixed to the surname a word denoting gender,' thereby illustrating one of the rules of the grammar which he delighted to cram and to thrash into the brains and through the palms of his unfortunate pupils.

Jenny Stewart promptly obeyed the word of command, and went up to Mr Haggle's desk.

'Were you looking on, girl Stewart?' asked the master in a dry voice, indicating the mark of interrogation by an exasperating cough.

'No, sir,' answered Jenny, with a resigned look and accent.

'I saw you close your book. Let me see it.'

Jenny handed up her book, and at a sign from Mr Haggle returned to her seat.

The master then shook out the book, and a soiled half sheet of note paper fell on his desk. He tucked his cane under his left arm, smoothed the paper

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carefully, and read it with close attention. Forty girls and sixty boys sat before him holding their breath; the hundred children occupied five forms, the girls in front.

Mr Haggle laid down his cane, rubbed his spectacles, wiped his shaven mouth, stroked the thick grey whiskers that, with his hair, enclosed his face like a faded plush frame, and read the paper again. A sardonic expression gradually appeared in every feature. His broad chin filled with innumerable dimples; his thick underlip dropped to one side; his upper lip tightened; his nostrils curled; his eyes gleamed; one heavy eyebrow rose and the other fell. Two kinds of men succeed, with different kinds of success, as schoolmasters: those who, besides having sympathy with childhood, possess the dramatist's faculty of thinking with it; and those who have neither sympathy nor insight. Mr Haggle was of the latter order. It was before the days of school boards; so he had managed to flog

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his way from the lowest to the highest post in the only government school in Kilurn—not the Perthshire Kilurn, but the Ayrshire one, on the eastern shore of the Firth of Clyde. Mr Haggle hated children, and his punishments were cruel: he hurt their minds as well as their bodies.

'Nothing like this ever happened before,' he said, increasing the natural harshness of his voice. 'I'm going to read it aloud.'

'Shame! shame!' I cried.

'Was that you, boy Cameron?' queried the master, as soon as his anger would allow him to speak.

'Yes.'

'Stand.'

I rose trembling, and as red as fire.

'Are you mad?' cried Mr Haggle, himself enraged to madness. 'How dare you? Such a sound was never heard before since I became headmaster here; and I will give you a flogging to match your impertinence. Continue standing while I read this.'

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I tried to speak, but couldn't articulate a word. Mortified and afraid, I took hold of the back of the form to steady myself.

'Don't lean, sir!' roared the master.

I pulled myself together, and stood with bent head and clenched hands. An occasional shiver passed through me and through the whole class. Mr Haggle felt the children trembling before him, and rejoiced. This is what he read:—

'My dearest Jenny,—I love you; I've tried to say it, but I can't. I hope you won't laugh. Will you love me and wait for me, and be my wife some day, and will you meet me to-night at seven at Bearhope's Point? Whether you like me or not, you might come for once and walk along the shore.

'James Cameron.

'*P.S.* — In to-day's history, you see, Richard II. married Isabella of France when she was only eight years old, and although, perhaps, we can't get married yet, we might be engaged. J. C.'

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Mr Haggle read, or rather sang, very loud, pitching his voice up and down after the fashion still common among the older Scottish ministers; and the children, understanding what was expected of them, laughed noisily.

'Silence!' shouted Mr Haggle, and the laughter ceased. 'Boys and girls, this is a thing that deserves to be laughed at, but it is a serious matter, too. You, girl Stewart—'

'I never read it, I never read it,' cried Jenny, bursting into tears.

Mr Haggle understood that Jenny meant to plead extenuating circumstances. In the awful voice which he adopted when he spoke a foreign language, he said, '*Petitio principii* — you are begging the question. You received the letter and concealed it; therefore you *meant* to read it. Therefore you will—'

Again he was interrupted, this time by a solitary laugh, hysterical a little, but with a happy ring in it.

'Was it actually you who laughed, Cameron?'

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'Yes,' I answered.

I had interpreted Jenny's exclamation differently from the master. For me it meant, 'Had I read the letter, I would have eaten it rather than give it up.' For a moment or two I felt no dread of the master.

Mr Haggle became livid with rage; it was fully half a minute before he found words.

'You shall smart for this, sir,' he said slowly.

Then he picked up the letter, and began to try to sting my soul.

'And so you are in love, are you, at thirteen—and Miss Stewart, too, I suppose, at twelve? It's very considerate of you—such a fiery lover — to ask her to wait. "The course of true love never did run smooth;" I suppose you've made up your mind for that. Did you bargain for any floggings in the course of your true love? Eh? But why should you wait? Why not get married to-morrow? You, with your distinguished abilities'—I was, as a

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rule, at the bottom of the class—'will easily make a way for yourself.'

But my feelings were not hurt, and my courage still held out; with a smile I looked the master in the face.

'Are you aware,' said Mr Haggle, 'of the enormity of what you have done? During a class you have allowed your thoughts to wander away to a subject which is forbidden absolutely to a boy of your age; and you have endeavoured to draw the attention of a girl to the same subject, suggesting to her ideas that should be far from her mind for half-a-dozen years yet, corrupting her young imagination, and making it as foul as your own.'

I stared at the master with a look of dull amazement; I didn't understand him. Then I laughed quietly.

'Go to the lobby!' shouted Mr Haggle.

I left the room at once, casting a long glance at Jenny, who looked up for a second through her tears.

Mr Haggle's room was on the upper floor in the centre of the building. It was en-

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tered by two doors, one on either side, opening on lobbies from which the upper rooms in the wings of the school were reached; these lobbies also led to the outside stairs, built against the wall and forming the fork of a Y; their united part, which led to the ground, being the stalk of the letter.

The lobbies—one for boys, the other for girls, as Mr Haggle often administered chastisement on feminine palms—were the places where punishments of a serious nature were inflicted.

Having posted his miserable favourite at the magisterial desk with a slate, on which to write the names of those who misconducted themselves during his absence, Mr Haggle entered the boys' lobby; but I was not there. Once or twice such a thing had happened before. It was foolish to run away, as Mr Haggle pointed out, for he was very swift of foot, and had invariably caught the fugitive and doubled the punishment. The importance of the present occasion increased his agility. He bounded down the stairs, across the pavement, and

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into the street. Seeing no signs on either hand of the fugitive, Mr Haggle returned to the playground just in time to see me disappearing over the wall opposite the gate.

I was actually the first boy of the many hundred 'lobbied' by Mr Haggle to whom this simple ruse had occurred; for when an unfortunate was sentenced to abide the master's wrath in that narrow passage, terror held him fast, or sent him off in disastrous flight. I had been there once or twice before, and had suffered as much from fear as any of the other wretches whose minds and bodies were warped and stunted by Mr Haggle's discipline; but this time, though I trembled, my presence of mind did not forsake me. Knowing that I was in for a thrashing in Mr Haggle's best style—which meant until the master's arm was tired—I had determined in a brief meditation to have value for my punishment; and so, surprised into a smile at the idea, I had crossed the stairs and hidden in the girls' lobby.

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'Come back, sir,' shouted the master, rushing across the playground.

I had dropped into the street before I heard the summons, but I hesitated for a second; I actually thought of climbing back and surrendering, so powerful was the master's sway over his pupils. The certainty, however, that nothing I could do now would in the least degree modify my punishment, determined me to postpone its infliction as long as possible. So I set off down the road at the top of my speed. I soon heard Mr Haggle on my track, and the feeling that I was being hunted caused my knees to tremble. I could hardly drag my legs after me; but the moment I turned into the High Street my limbs recovered their strength, and I span along at a frantic pace.

It was market-day in Kilurn, and the street was thronged. The various groups made way for me, and stared after me with divers degrees of unintelligent wonder; but when Mr Haggle appeared among them they soon understood what was toward.

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Such a chase up the High Street had been seen on a market-day before. The news that 'the schulemaister was after a laddie' sped on in advance of me, and the business of the market was soon at a standstill. Numbers of the farmers, corn-merchants and tradesmen present had boys of their own at Mr Haggle's school, and some of the younger ones had themselves been under his ferula. They all knew something of the severity of the schoolmaster's discipline, and although they would not interfere actively, feeling in their good, stupid hearts that Mr Haggle only did his duty, somehow or other there was a clear lane for me, and a most tortuous passage for the master. The hum of bargain-making had ceased along the street; windows went up, and old women and young leaned out with muttered imprecations on the schoolmaster, and more loudly expressed encouragement and sympathy for the runaway; and yet not one of these dames would have given me shelter had I sought it of them. They, too, believed that Mr Haggle was right,

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and that I was wrong, and would have confessed to weakness in sympathising with me. It is very strange! How old the world is!—and people have not yet learned to trust their hearts.

When I found myself beyond the crowd, I turned down Heron Lane; and when the schoolmaster arrived at the corner, I was not to be seen.

Heron Lane, a long winding passage, led from the High Street to the shore. It was closely built on both sides, and the schoolmaster saw at once that his prey must have been received into one or other of the shops or houses at the top of it: he had been very close on my heels, so that he knew I could not have gone far down the lane. He did not take long to decide which was the likeliest hiding-place. Old Peter Stewart's shop was the third building on the left-hand side of the lane; and as Peter was the father of Jenny Stewart, the girl accessory to my crime, Mr Haggle went across at once and accosted him as he stood in his doorway.

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'Did you see Jamie Cameron pass, Mr Stewart?' asked Mr Haggle.

'I did not,' said Stewart, turning away.

Mr Haggle followed him, feeling—what everybody experienced on entering Stewart's shop for the hundredth as well as for the first time—a sense of impending extinction under a ruin of books. Pillars of books further straitened the originally narrow doorway. There was barely room for customers to stand at the counter—an article of furniture which had to be taken on trust, as the stock-in-trade had been built against it, and piled on its top, so that it had the appearance of a solid block of books, behind which little more of Stewart was visible than his beaming black eyes. On either end of the counter a loftier heap stood up; that at the door, having the wall to lean against, seemed a comparatively secure structure; whereas the other heap, like the gable of a castle in the air, was for ever tottering and crumbling, and being rebuilt in the most fantastic shapes. On the customer's side of the counter a mass of books about

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five feet high, six feet deep and ten feet long lay, compact as a pile of bricks, dense and hopeless as ignorance, and hiding all the shelves except the two top ones, which groaned with old calf-bound theology. There was more room, though less light, on the bookseller's side of the counter; several tiers of books, and some mildewed engravings, permitted only a ray or two of the willingest sun to struggle through the window here and there. A box containing coal in a corner, and a chair on either side of the fire, left just space enough for those operations of cookery in which Stewart was an adept, and which, after the contemplation of his daughter, formed his chief delight. He was, indeed, a much better cook than bookseller, but thrift supplied the place of skill. The litter in his shop was an accumulation of unsaleable books gathered during many years. A Glasgow acquaintance in the business visited Stewart periodically, and all purchases made between his visits were kept in a box under the counter until they should be inspected

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by this authority. The great man from the city took a selection with him, accounting for them on his return; the rejected books were then arranged in the shop according to size, and troubled the soul of Stewart no more.

Late in life Peter Stewart had for pity's sake married the widow of an old friend. His wife had lived only two years after the birth of Jenny; and from that time the girl had been brought up almost entirely by her father. The relations between the two grew to be more intimate and sympathetic than is usual even between mother and daughter. In the days of Jenny's infancy Stewart had managed all domestic matters himself, and, having acquired a liking for cookery, refused to yield the ladle to Jenny. There had been a fight over the duster and the broom; but at the age of ten Jenny had succeeded in making them her insignia.

Mr Haggle, autocrat as he was, felt constrained to subdue his overbearing manner in the presence of Peter Stewart—a tribute commonly offered by even greater men

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than schoolmasters to a life of quiet independence.

'And you didn't see Jamie Cameron pass here?' asked Mr Haggle again.

'I did not,' answered Stewart.

'Did you see him at all?' pursued the schoolmaster.

'I did.'

'Where did he go, then?'

'Find out. I'll answer no more questions.'

'The discipline of the school must be maintained, Mr Stewart,' said the schoolmaster severely. 'I require your support, and that of every law-abiding inhabitant of Kilurn. As a matter of duty you should tell me where Jamie Cameron is hiding.'

'How can you tell that I ken where he's hiding? But it doesn't matter. If I did, I wouldn't tell on him. I wouldn't tell on a fox, and do you think I'd put you on the scent o' Jamie Cameron, and him such friends with Jenny?'

'Oh! you know about that, do you?' said Mr Haggle, with a sneer. 'Do you know

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that he has made her a formal offer of marriage?'

'What!' cried Stewart, thrusting one hand in his pocket, and sticking a pen he held in the other behind his ear. 'Do you mean to tell me so? Ay, man! In our young days—if I may be allowed to signify that you was ever young, Mr Haggle—we used to say, "Boys will be boys;" but now we'll have to make it "Boys will be men," I'm thinking. Made an offer of his heart and hand? Did he, though! At thirteen! Well, well! And it'll be for that you were wanting to scud the bit laddie? Do you not think that's just a wee ill-natured, Mr Haggle?'

'Ill-natured!' exclaimed Mr Haggle, wrathfully. 'But I won't argue the point with a man who talks in this cold-blooded manner about such wicked precocity. During a class — the grammar hour, too — this child of Satan—for I cannot call him anything else—managed to convey, under my very nose, a love-letter to your daughter—an altogether unprecedented piece of insub-

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ordination. I must find him and flog him at once.'

'Under your very nose? Ha, ha! At thirteen! Do you ken that I was in love when I was seven—with a bonny, wee, fair-haired lassie, Mr Haggle? And I was friends with two laddies that proposed at the age of six; ay, and married the lassies at the hinder end, too. You should never have been a schoolmaster, Mr Haggle. I read a bit among my bookies, Mr Haggle; and the more I read the more I'm convinced that there's far more harm done by strictness, even *with* love, than by laxity, even if it comes from sheer indolence and carelessness. And you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Mr Haggle. And, hark ye! If I hear o' you laying your fell claws on Jenny, I'll—did you ever read *Roderick Random*, Mr Haggle?'

'God forbid!' exclaimed the schoolmaster.

'God would be pretty well pleased, I'm thinking, if you were to learn a lesson o' humanity, even out o' *Roderick Random*, Mr Haggle. Well, you and me'll act a scene

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from *Roderick Random* if you touch a hair o' Jenny's head. I would scourge ye with your own cane before all your scholars till you could neither stand nor sit; and take a month for it gladly, and that's a fact.'

Mr Haggle, without replying, retired from the old bookseller's shop, and prosecuted his inquiries after the runagate further down the lane, without success. At last he gave up the search. On his return, as he passed Stewart, who again stood in his doorway, he said, 'If I find that he has been sheltered by you—!' a significant double shake of the head finished the sentence.

Some seconds after Mr Haggle's retreat, Stewart re-entered his shop, and, climbing up a small ladder placed against his embankment of books, rested his elbows on the top of it, and addressed his shelves of theology.

'Suppose now,' he said, 'Jamie Cameron had come into my shop, and had slippit round and hid under the counter in front o' the fire, he would be fair skelped with the heat, and I would have tell't no lies; for, if he came in here, he didn't pass by my door, and

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that was all I said. And when he asked me if I knew where he was, all I said was, "Find out." If Jamie Cameron is under my counter just now, the best thing he can do is to get out as quietly as he can while my back's turned, so that I can say I never saw or heard him leaving my shop; for he's a fell deevil, the schoolmaster, and I wouldn't like the laddie to suffer because I sheltered him. The worst of it is, if he is in my shop I must have seen him enter; he couldn't possibly have hidden under my counter without my leave. Well, that'll just have to be a case of conscience, Mr Baxter, for you and me to settle between us,' and he nodded his head at a fat volume of *The Saint's Everlasting Rest.* 'It's a lie I mean to tell—that is, if he did enter my shop—Eh! what's that? It must have been a mouse. Ah! well, Mr Baxter, you and me 'll discuss that little point later on. Mind, I never saw or heard the laddie leave my shop; and if he never *left* it, and if he's not *in* it, how could he have entered it, even although I may have seen him, or thought I saw him, coming

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in. That's my line o' argument, Mr Baxter, and you can take it to avizandum for a while. We'll have a bout o' casuistry in the gloaming.'

While the old man, his eye fixed on Baxter's portly volume, was still addressing the double row of divinity, with scorched cheek and anxious air I slipped out into the street.

And now I want to go back to Jenny Stewart. Having brooded for many years over some things that Jenny said, my visions have become real to me, and I think you will find them as verisimilar as those incidents in which I was an actor.

When Jenny Stewart returned from school in the afternoon the market was over. She was only twelve, but she was tall for her age, and something about her that day drew all eyes to her as she walked home. Young men and boys, old men and women and other girls all looked at her with interest. The town-clerk, the doctor, the most reputable solicitor, the banker, and a wealthy but unranked burgher, obstructing the pavement opposite the post-office, opened a path

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for her with military promptitude, although they were half-ashamed of it afterwards; for, said the unranked burgher, 'That's old Stewart's daughter.'

'The Radical?' queried the doctor, with an inflection which presupposed a negative.

'Ay, but she is though,' replied the unranked burgher, as if to a contradiction.

Then the men looked curiously at each other, and drew together again, planting themselves with a rigidity which seemed to bid defiance to courtesy and womankind.

One of the round dozen of loafers who hung about the cross of Kilurn—a weather-bronzed slab of granite with runic carving and inscription—said aloud as Jenny passed, 'There's a gallant lassie for ye, now!' He was a poacher, and had some imagination, as all the more daring lawbreakers have. She did not hear, nor did she catch the lavish glances thrown at her. She seemed to waste her eyes upon the pavement; but when she did raise them it was plain that, like other stars,

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although they had been looking down they had not been watching what lay beneath them; they shone through some night of day-dreams regardless of the underworld. She cared not now for the raree show of the street. She did not steal side-glances at shop windows to see herself—a use every girl from six years upwards confesses putting panes to. She had neither ears nor eyes for the black-eyed girl who twirled a tambourine to the piano-organ of her swarthy mate. On other days she would have listened devoutly, childish-wise, and wholly unprejudiced against the implicit enjoyment of that which comes from the headless hand. Even fashionably-dressed ladies could not withdraw Jenny's eyes from the vision that they watched.

Turning more by habit than from intention into Heron Lane, she was in her father's shop before she quite realised her whereabouts.

'Hullo ye!' cried old Stewart cheerily.

She held up her face for his kiss, and then went with him into the little parlour

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at the back of the shop, where tea was ready. She said very little and ate very little. Her silence was so unusual, her preoccupation so evident, that the old man wondered if my letter could be the only cause. However, he asked no questions; and she went upstairs to her own room as soon as tea was over.

She sat down for a minute or two, and rested her head on her tabled hands, changing the cheek until both were red. Then she started up and examined the furniture in detail, as if she had never seen it before. The room was filled with a collection of fugitive pieces, the whole dusky plenishing, old-fashioned, experienced, secret. An inlaid six-legged walnut side-board, with sliding panels and deep end-drawers, with ringed lions' heads in brass for handles, and a pair of laburnum wood chairs with cup-shaped backs, pleased her best. Curious old coloured prints adorned the walls; and, more notably, two small oil-paintings illustrating the departure and

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the degradation of the prodigal son—now resplendent in a ruffled shirt, broidered vest, knee breeches and a tie-wig, now grovelling among the rags of the same, with the swine nuzzling about him—hung above the fireplace. The mantelpiece looked like a gallery in miniature with china shepherds and shepherdesses and blackleaded metal horses. She looked over everything, blew away some specks of dust, and set a sprightly Strephon a little nearer a languishing Chloe. Then she glanced rapidly over the books on the sideboard. She plucked out a volume and dived into its leaves like a bee into a bell. Soon she thrust it back and seized another. That and a third one were repudiated. A fourth seemed better suited to her taste; but it also was soon cast aside. Then she ducked suddenly under the sideboard, and lugged out a bulky, tattered quarto. She slapped it petulantly, to clear it from dust, and, flinging it on the table, sat down resolutely and opened it at the beginning. It was a volume of

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some far back year's illustrated newspaper, and had been her earliest picture-book. She knew well each picture as its friendly face appeared, but doggedly proposed to go through the book from the highly allegoric frontispiece to the more highly allegoric close, smoothing out all the dog's ears and placing properly strayed leaves. But old faces tired her, the homely feelings they inspired irritated her, and she threw the book to a corner of the room, where it lay in, what she thought for a regretful moment, reproachful dishevelment. Then she opened the door of her concealed bed and threw herself on it face downwards. A minute later a chintz cover, whisked off the top of what looked like a large chest, revealed an old-fashioned piano, at which the demon of unrest whirled her like a tortured soul. And yet she was only twelve.

She touched the keyboard languidly, hovered over it a second, then bounded away to the window. Instantly she was back again, and, striking the jingling keys

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in a frenzy of desperation, began to sing 'The Blue-bells of Scotland.'

'Oh! where, and, oh! where, does your Highland laddie dwell?'

The surging music bore her voice along. Her simmering blood flamed up. She sang with all her might,—

'I'll claim a priest to marry us,
A clerk to say "Amen;"
And I'll ne'er part again
From my bonnie Highlandman.'

She was only twelve, but for a wondering moment the woman was broad awake.

She had little knowledge of music, but her fingers danced over the keys. She felt the pianist's supreme delight of perfect ease and mastery. Her hands were like a summer breeze shaking a tune at random out of the tinkling flowers. She was in complete sympathy with what she played, and was so delighted with herself that, trading on her success, she began to

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try a sonata recently given her. With much labour she came little speed. Even the notes would not obey her, and she was wholly unable to lay the spirit of the piece. Her blood flagged, her fingers languished. She flung back her hair, which had come loose, and gulped down a sob at her ineptitude. Where should she turn for energy and ease? In a moment her face lit up with passion, pathos, pity, and she began,—

'When ye gang awa', Jamie.'

Having finished that song, she made no second excursion into unknown regions, but sang out with a happy peal the first half verse of 'The Bailiff's Daughter.' Then she ceased singing, and, with her head hanging above the keys, as if her spirit knelt, she played over and over the simple melody, gently and more gently listening to each verse; and the quaint song and the quaint instrument, with its muffled white notes and its sharps piercing and piping with age, sent the wine of life

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fuming into her young head, and she rose, reeling, and stood in the middle of the room. She writhed on her heel and stared about her. Something ought to happen now, she thought indeed. Watching, hoping, listening, conjuring, she stood for some minutes; then, snatching her hat, she rushed out.

Stewart watched his daughter until she had passed from his sight. Then he went up to her room, and, opening the door just wide enough to admit his head, looked about anxiously. He could discover no clue to Jenny's sudden departure; and, as her room was too sacred for its threshold to be crossed lightly, he closed the door with marked gentleness and returned to the shop.

Wrapped in her dream, Jenny wandered down to the shore. There she found a grass-green cushion spotted with honey-scented sea-pinks, and, gathering her feet under her, she sat down opposite the sunset. Behind her the night thickened, and at her feet the sea embroidered the sand

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with shells. As she looked across the still, crimson water to the crimson sunset, tears began to fall into her lap, she knew not why.

'Jenny!'

Her name was spoken so quietly that she barely started. It was like a voice in her dream.

'Jenny!'

She turned her head and saw me.

'This is Bearhope's Point, Jenny,' I said, bending towards her; 'but it's a while after seven.'

'So it is Bearhope's Point,' said Jenny; 'but I forgot about that.'

'You didn't come to meet me, then?' I said.

'I don't know; I think I did,' answered Jenny. 'Look,' she continued, pointing to the rim of the sun that was vanishing behind a hill.

'Ay,' said I, 'it's awful bonny.'

I sat down on the green cushion quite close to her; but she gathered her dress about her, and put half a foot between us.

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'Can I no' come near?' I asked, kneeling and leaning my hands on the cushion.

She looked at me wonderingly, and with some fear.

'You're near enough, Jamie,' she said.

I went towards her on my knees, but she stopped me with a question: 'How did you get away from Haggle?'

Then I told her of my flight along the High Street, and how her father had sheltered me; how I had gone home at the hour of dismissal as if I had come straight from school; and how I had waited on her for an hour at Bearhope's Point. Jenny, in return, told of her piano-playing, and of her unrest, not knowing what it meant. During this conversation I had gradually diminished the space between us, until I sat quite close to her, with my foot touching hers.

'Jenny, I wish I was you,' said I under my breath, after a pause for a minute.

'Would you like to be a lassie?' cried Jenny, with an amazed smile.

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'Ay,' said I, looking away into the west where the sunset still smoked and smouldered as cloud after cloud paled, glowed again, and went slowly out. 'I mind when I first thought I would like to be a lassie. There's a picture in an almanack called "Water-Lilies"; and it's in two, and it's coloured. On one side there's just the white water-lily with its green leaves on the top of the water; on the other there's a little burn with two young ladies in white dresses like night-gowns. One of the ladies is lying on the bank, and the other is just stepping into the water. The one that's lying is smiling; but the other one's looking down, blushing, you would think. At first I thought shame to look at her; but one day it came to me that I would just like to *be* her; and after that I could look at her. I looked at her for hours, and I always longed more and more to be her; but I wish I was you now, Jenny.'

I turned my innocent, glowing eyes on hers; and they fell before my gaze.

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'Would *you* like to be *me*, Jenny?' I asked breathlessly.

'No,' answered Jenny, panting a little, 'I would just like to be mysel'.'

'Maybe girls don't feel like boys,' said I. 'You can like me without wishing to be me, can you?'

'Yes,' said Jenny. 'Had we no' better go now?'

'Wait a wee,' said I.

'What are you going to do the morn?' asked Jenny anxiously.

'Never mind the morn,' said I.

'But you'll get an awful licking, Jamie,' said Jenny, with difficulty stifling a sob.

'I suppose I will,' said I, paling a little. 'But I wouldn't mind the worst licking Haggle could give me, if you would kiss me, Jenny.'

Jenny twisted her fingers in her lap and looked down; and the sunset had died away, so that it had nothing to do with the deep crimson that suffused her face. I put my trembling arm about her waist, and kissed her cheek, and she turned with

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wonder and delight in her eyes and pressed her little burning mouth to mine.

'Haggle can do what he likes to me,' said I, 'I'll not open my lips.'

'Poor Jamie,' said Jenny, kissing me again.

'Never mind,' said I; 'it'll be over in two or three minutes. Jenny, what would you like me to be?'

'To be?'

'Yes; to do, I mean. Will I learn a trade or a profession?'

'You must just please yourself.'

'No; but I want to please you. What would you like your husband to be, Jenny?'

Jenny looked down at the points of her boots without speaking; and I looked down at the points of mine expecting her answer.

'I wouldn't like you to be anything,' said Jenny. 'If we could have a little house and a garden—and could we travel? I would like to see the Pyramids.'

'And Pompey's Pillar,' I suggested, with sudden excitement.

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'That the sailors climbed up in the reading book? Yes, I would like to see that too.'

I had taken her hand, and we sat together in silence for several minutes. The sky was grey now, and the water; and the green of the hills opposite was gradually darkening into ebony. A breeze had sprung up, and soon it grew stormy and sharp and mowed off the tops of the waves; and when some of the salt sea-blossoms were cast in our faces, we rose, and walked quickly up Heron Lane, hand in hand. The wind from the firth pursued us a little way, and, before we left it behind, it took Jenny's loose hair and blew it all about my neck.

. . . . . .

I was the first boy in the playground next morning. School began at half-past nine, and I was there by nine. With my hands in my pockets, I lounged against a buttress, and greeted with a smile the other boys as they dropped in by twos and threes. Some with nonchalance

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hailed me, 'Hullo, Cameron!' and turned at once to marbles or some other game. Others formed groups to stare at me, and discuss my case. One or two began to jeer, but they were in a very small minority, and soon gave it up. When my own particular friends arrived they took me away to an unfrequented part of the playground, and gave me sage advice as to the endurance of my punishment, with practical illustrations of the best way to hold out my hand, and reminiscences of weak-minded boys who had been enabled to display extraordinary hardihood by meeting the palmies—or 'luifies,' as they call them on the Clyde—half-way, and then withdrawing the hand with the cane on it. 'Just as you would catch a swift ball, you know: as soon as it touches your hands, pull them in.'

The departments of the school were opened separately by their several masters with praise and prayer and the reading of a portion from the Bible. Mr Haggle that morning sang two double verses of

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a metrical psalm, read a long passage from one of the gospels, and delighted himself with a brief but eloquent exposition of the text: 'Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' He then prayed at considerable length, referring to the painful duties which sometimes fell to the lot of a teacher, and begging to be saved from the sinfulness that spared the rod and spoiled the child. The rustle that followed the conclusion of the prayer having subsided, Mr Haggle called on 'boy Cameron' to stand.

I stood up promptly, and looked towards Jenny, whose back was to me; but she turned, and gave me a glance from her brown eyes; then I felt quite confident, and even careless. Mr Haggle noticed the by-play and scored it against me.

'Come here, sir,' said the master.

I walked up to the desk steadily.

'Now, boys and girls,' said Mr Haggle 'this is an extreme case, and I mean to make an example of James Cameron. I

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shall not punish him in the lobby, but here, that you may all see how wicked he has been.'

There were rumours in the school of some terrific floggings administered by Mr Haggle before the class for unexampled offences, but none of the children present had ever been spectators of one of these special punishments. A deep hush fell on the room, and many children turned pale; still, the bulk of the boys and some of the girls anticipated a fearful joy from the sufferings of their class-mate.

Mr Haggle went to a press in which he kept an assortment of canes. He took out a thing—hideous when its application is considered—about four feet long, as thick as his own middle finger, and with a crook at the end. Having returned to his desk and breathed on his hand to give it a better grip, he seized the plain end of the cane, swished it once or twice in the air to test its suppleness, and turned to his victim. I had only a faint idea of what was in store for

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me; I was away on the shore with Jenny, and I thought of the crimson sunset, and the chill, singing wind that blew the foam-flakes in our faces.

'Hold out,' said the master, and I extended my right hand. I wondered for a moment, as my misery closed in on me, if I would ever see the Pyramids and Pompey's Pillar now.

White as paper, with clenched teeth, but without a flicker of a finger, I took the twelve strokes which the master brought down slowly, with all his force, on my little quivering hand. After the twelfth Mr Haggle paused, and, with a great gulp that swallowed down countless sobs, I whipped my hand into my pocket, and, bending down, pressed it tightly.

'The other hand,' said the master.

I had thought it was over. With a sick cry, and an appeal for mercy in my face, I looked up at Mr Haggle.

'Come, be quick,' said the master coldly.

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I braced myself to bear it; the tears stood in my eyes, and my heart was bursting, but I held out my left hand steadily.

It is the case that the pain of a whipping on the hand is felt most keenly shortly after the blows have ceased. Just as Mr Haggle brought down the first stroke on my left hand, the nerves of the right, that had been deadened by the number and heaviness of the stripes, wakened up and carried their entire message to my brain. Jenny, the crowded room, and the sardonic inflictor of the pain were all forgotten; I cried out and writhed, and tears and sweat streamed down my face. My left hand fell after the third blow, and when I tried to raise it I couldn't keep it open; but that was a matter of indifference to Mr Haggle; he brought the cane down as before, but on my knuckles. I screamed, and thrust my left hand into my other pocket.

'Hold out,' said the master. But all my courage and resolution were gone; I screamed and sobbed, and stamped with

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pain and the anticipation of pain, and made no attempt to obey Mr Haggle's order.

'Hold out,' said the master again; and when I failed to comply he lashed me on the legs till I was almost suffocated with my tears and cries.

'Will you hold out now?' said the master.

Bending back till I nearly overbalanced myself, and pressing my elbow close to my side, my knees trembling and my right hand clutching the air, I managed to extend my left hand half open. Again the cane came down on my knuckles, and again I screamed and danced. The remaining seven strokes were given and taken in the same way; after each I tried to snatch a moment's respite by pocketing my hand, and Mr Haggle lashed me on the legs till I 'held out.'

At the end of this second dozen Mr Haggle said, 'Sit down there'—a culprit's seat stood beside the desk. 'That is your punishment for writing a letter to the girl

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Stewart during the grammar-hour. I will punish you in a little for running away. I'll take the psalm.'

'Please, sir,' said three or four girls at once, 'please, sir, Jenny Stewart's fainted.'

Mr Haggle looked suspiciously at the white face and closed eyes of my little sweetheart, but there was no sham about it. He himself, much against the grain, carried her down to the head-mistress, who having restored her to consciousness, sent her home.

'The psalm,' said Mr Haggle, on returning to his room.

The first lesson always consisted in the repetition of two verses of a psalm or two questions from the Shorter Catechism. The class had learned during the session the whole of the hundred and nineteenth psalm; and had then turned to the beginning of the Psalter; the task for that morning was the conclusion of the second psalm, which runs, in the version used, as follows:—

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'Now, therefore, kings, be wise; be taught,
Ye judges of the earth:
Serve God in fear, and see that ye
Join trembling with your mirth.

Kiss ye the Son, lest in his ire,
Ye perish from the way,
If once his wrath begins to burn:
Bless'd all that on him stay.'

The girls repeated first, and all of them, except five, were letter-perfect. These five received two 'luifies' each. They were then instructed to amend the fault, with the inspiring assurance that, if they weren't perfect by the time Mr Haggle had heard the boys, the punishment would be doubled.

Ten boys failed and received four 'luifies' each. Then the master returned to the girls. Four of the failures managed to pass on a second trial, but the fifth one stuck in the middle of the second verse. It is a difficult verse to grasp the meaning of, and the unintelligent sing-song, which was the chief characteristic of the elocution of Mr Haggle's pupils, kept on its course regardless of points, and tended to obscure the sense of the simplest pass-

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age. The poor girl who failed a second time was a very dull, unpleasant-looking creature with a hunch back, to whom the lightest intellectual work was torture. Nevertheless, she received four 'luifies,' with a promise of eight if she failed a third time.

Six of the ten boys were not perfect on a second trial. With them also the second verse was the stumbling block.

> 'Cushee the Son les-tin 'is-ire
> Yeperrish from the way. . . .'

Rapidly running their words together, they got that length with ease, and there they stuck. If Mr Haggle had been possessed of brains of even ordinary quality he would have detected in the failure a sign of superior intelligence. The boys perceived a kind of sense up to the point where they stuck; there, however, as the colon at 'burn' was disregarded by them, and its force quite unknown, the utter meaninglessness, to them, of the sounds they tried to recall paralysed their memories. These six

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boys having each received eight 'luifies,' what Mr Haggle thought a brilliant idea occurred to him.

'Boy Cameron,' he cried, with a sparkle in his eye and a new tang in his voice, 'say your psalm.'

I had been moaning with pain, and nursing my blistered hands—both of them were blue and blistered; but I now became silent and looked up with affright. Like most of the children in the room, I had learned the second psalm many times in my short life, but only by rote, and as I had not prepared any lessons at all on the previous night, I could not recall correctly a single line of that morning's task.

'Come, sir; get up, and say your psalm,' persisted Mr Haggle, approaching me.

I rose, and began, with a sob after every word, and a break in my voice—

'Now, therefore, judges of the earth,'

and stopped.

I felt that the line was a good line, but I was horribly conscious that it was all wrong.

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'Try again,' said the master.

'Please, sir,' said I in despair, 'I know all the words, but I can't say the lines.'

'What tomfool talk is this?' cried Mr Haggle. 'Hold out.'

I looked round the room, at the ceiling, and at the master; but there was no mercy anywhere. Mr Haggle was quite unmoved by the terrible trouble that must have darkened my face. I put my hands in my armpits and pressed them tightly; then I blew hard on my swollen fingers and pressed them in my armpits again.

'Come, sir; I can't wait all day,' said the master. 'Hold out.'

I half extended my arm; but I couldn't open my hand—it was a physical impossibility.

'I canna', Maister Haggle, I canna',' I said.

'We'll see about that,' said the master.

He seized my left wrist, and holding it out at the stretch of his arm, brought his cane down twice on my blistered, swollen hand. I lost my temper, I kicked over

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the master's desk, and, seizing a frameless slate which lay on the seat beside me, threw it at the head of my tormentor. I had laughed hysterically when I upset the desk; but I cried with rage a moment afterwards, for my dangerous missile had missed its aim.

'Ay!' said the master; 'so we have our little tantrums, have we?'

He seized me by the collar, and lashed me on the body till the cane dropped from his hand, and I had no strength left to shriek.

'Now, sir,' said Mr Haggle, forcing me to sit on the culprit's bench, 'how many more thrashings do you want? You learn to keep your temper, or it'll be the worse for you. You have done wrong, and I advise you to make up your mind to take the penalty quietly. Next hour I'll flog you for running away, and it will be wise of you not to require any more accidental thrashings in the course of your punishment. That will do,' he continued to the class; 'I've no more time for the psalm. Those

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who failed will stay in at four, and learn three double verses of another psalm—they will be told which when the time comes.'

The class was then dismissed for five minutes, but I was not allowed to go. During the interval Mr Haggle eyed me like a cat watching a mouse.

When the class returned, they were set to writing, and as soon as all the children were occupied, the master resumed his punitive duties.

'Boy Cameron, stand; hold out.'

I struggled to my feet, but sank down almost immediately, my heart was broken; and I was not the first boy whose heart had been broken by Mr Haggle, under pretence of breaking a rebellious spirit.

The master did not repeat the order to stand; but he growled out his other so often reiterated one, 'Hold out.'

I held out my hand slackly, but it fell on the seat; Mr Haggle brought his cane down on it as it lay, and I screamed with the pain. He then repeated his order to hold out; but I sat on my hands. The

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master was about to lash me on the legs, when an important matter which he had forgotten in the excitement of the morning's varied labours recurred to his memory.

'By-the-bye,' he said jocosely, sitting down in his chair opposite me, 'where did you vanish to when you turned the corner of Heron Lane yesterday?'

'I'll no tell you that,' said I sullenly. 'I'll no tell y'it. You can do what you like.'

'Now, what a fool you are!' said Mr Haggle, striking me with all his strength over both knees. 'Do you actually want another accidental thrashing?'

'I'll no' tell you,' I screamed.

That which had not been present in my mind since my prolonged punishment began was recalled by Mr Haggle's question. Even Jenny's fainting had not had any special meaning for me, so dazed was I at the time. Now, however, as I had ceased entirely the attempt to endure in silence, my mind was freer, and the memory of the sunset, and the night

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breeze, and Jenny's kisses, returned to my broken heart, and gave me a little passing strength. Mr Haggle rose and lashed me as I sat—on my back, shoulders, legs, arms and hands. It was amazing that I did not faint.

'Now, sir,' he said, resuming his seat, 'where did you hide?'

'I'll no' tell you,' I shrieked.

Mr Haggle lashed me on each thigh, and then put his question, 'Where did you hide?'

I replied only with cries and groans.

'I'll whip you till you answer me,' said Mr Haggle.

He put the question more than a dozen times, giving me two lashes after each repetition. The master had now lost his temper. He thrust his face into mine and yelled at me, with fierce eyes, knotted forehead and hot breath. Suddenly he desisted. This was a morning of brilliant ideas for Mr Haggle, and the most brilliant of them had just suggested itself.

'Stop writing,' he said. 'Stand. Let us pray.'

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He prayed with great fervour that this punishment might be sanctified to James Cameron; that the poor misguided boy might be led to see the error of his ways, and, in submission to the superior placed over him by Providence, tell what was required of him.

At the conclusion of the prayer the class resumed their writing, and Mr Haggle seated himself again opposite me.

'Now, James,' he said, in as soft a voice as he could adopt, 'I hope your heart has been touched, and that you will answer my question. Where did you hide yesterday?'

I shook my head.

'Very well,' said the master, rising; 'we'll just have to begin again, James. Stand up, sir, and hold out.'

I could do neither for the pain of my legs and hands, which yet was as nothing to the anguish of my mind. I sat with my hands in my pockets, trembling in every limb, and swaying backwards and forwards. On my failure to obey the

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command Mr Haggle lashed me on the thighs, the calves of the legs, the knees, on the backs of my hands through my pockets; and I sat with contorted face and the tears streaming down my cheeks and cried at the pitch of my voice, 'Oh, dear me! Oh, dear me!'

'Where did you hide?' said Mr Haggle, pausing.

No answer.

'I hope you understand that I shall whip you till you tell me,' said Mr Haggle, attacking my legs again.

A few more strokes, and I gave in.

'In Stewart's, the bookseller's,' I yelled.

'A mistake in grammar,' said Mr Haggle; 'the double possessive is needless. You will bring me written out a hundred times to-morrow, "In Stewart, the bookseller's." Now, I shall give you your punishment for running away. Hold out.'

Every pen in the room stopped, and most of the children turned pale with horror. As for me I rolled off the seat,

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and lay on the floor kicking and screaming.

'What's the matter?' said Mr Haggle, surveying his pupils. 'Continue writing.' But the involuntary action of the children had its effect on him. He considered for a minute, biting the end of his cane.

'Well,' he said, 'it is always best, if possible, to temper justice with mercy. I expect you've had enough to serve you for many a day. You can go to your place, Cameron.'

I rose and limped with difficulty to where my writing copy lay; and one boy whispered to another that 'Haggle was na' so bad, after all. He let Jamie off a lickin' he had promised him, mind ye.'

The master heard; and the boy received four 'luifies' for talking during class.

My father and mother had been dead for several years, and I lived with an uncle, who, while he had a sincere sense of duty, was altogether under the control of his wife. Mrs Cameron, my aunt, had

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six children of her own, and with every addition to her family her mind and heart seemed to have contracted, instead of expanding. It is surely the case that the more claims there are on a woman's affections the more abounding is her love; but there are exceptions, and Mrs Cameron was one. She fixed a gulf between her own children and her nephew—not in her heart alone, but openly, in food, in clothes, in education; and thus it was that, instead of accompanying my cousins to the expensive private school they attended, I had been given over, under pretence of being difficult to manage, to the tender mercies of Mr Haggle. 'Keep him to his work,' said Mrs Cameron to the master. 'He's an idle, dreamy boy, and requires a tight rein.'

Such a series of thrashings as Mr Haggle had given me in one forenoon were not of very frequent occurrence thirty years ago, nor were they nearly so common then as they had been in the days of the parish schoolmasters; but there are still teachers

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who cherish the tradition of education by means of pain and fear; and in Mr Haggle's time, although better counsels were beginning to prevail, the propriety of severe corporal punishment for every species of offence, and as the true menstruum of shy capacity, was almost universally recognised. It was not every boy, however, that Mr Haggle would have flogged as he had flogged me. The master was carefully informed of the domestic circumstances of all his pupils; and it was only when he felt certain that the severity of his discipline would be supported by parents and guardians that he did his duty as drum-major thoroughly.

Knowing quite well that it would be useless to appeal to my uncle or aunt, I tried hard to conceal the condition of my hands; but my cousins had heard of my punishment, and I was put on bread and water for a week.

In the dusk I crawled out and went down to the shore—not to Bearhope's Point, but to a rocky place where no sea-

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pinks grew. I was too late for the sunset; the waves and the sky were cold and grey; but the wind was warmer than it had been the night before, and I took off my bonnet and let it blow through my hair. I sat for an hour trying to think, and trying to be the Jamie Cameron who had made love to Jenny Stewart. I set myself to recall the meeting with my sweetheart at Bearhope's Point; but it wouldn't come back to me—none of it except my promise to endure my punishment in silence. I tried to remember my mother, to think of some happy days I had spent during the previous summer with one of my companions at a farm where everybody had been kind to me; I tried to think of being a man, of marrying Jenny Stewart, of travelling, and of the Pyramids. It was all in vain. Mr Haggle's harsh voice with its heartless 'Hold out'; the swish of the cane; the ache in my hands, in my legs, in my mind —above all, the moment when I broke down and cried, and that other moment

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when I told where I had hidden, would not quit my memory.

I had frightful dreams that night, and wakened several times; and there was nobody to comfort me—nobody even to laugh at me, for I slept alone in a little stifling box-room.

Next morning on my road to school, Jenny Stewart made up on me, and touching me on the shoulder, said, 'Jamie, dear,' and looked round into my face sweetly and mournfully. I returned her glance with a shiver, and then ran away as fast as I could. My heart was broken and my mind was dulled. At thirteen I had lost faith in myself.

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EAGLE'S SHADOW

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Eagle's Shadow

THE progress of Ebenezer Eaglesham in the office of Messrs Clay, Clod and M'Latchy was unromantically slow. It took him thirteen years to climb to a stool of his own before a desk of his own in the immediate neighbourhood of the confidential clerk, with a set of books to keep and a key of the private safe. He had started from a niche behind the stove. There, as office-boy, during numerous short intervals between his multifarious duties, he had rubbed into the wall with the dirt of his jacket and the grease of his hair a permanent impression of his head and shoulder, known in office as 'Eagle's Shadow.'

At twenty-six, with 'the confidence of his employers,' a hundred a year, and an entire

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fortnight at midsummer to do what he liked in, he experienced for the first time in his life a feeling of manhood, and was moderately well satisfied. Having never had so long a holiday before, he made great preparations for it. As it rained the whole time it was lucky for him that he took some books with him — some stories of adventure, Froude's *Oceana*, and Spencer's *Study of Sociology*, and a book on language. —for he was anxious to improve himself. The book that had the greatest effect upon him was Spencer's, of course; a fact which the reader will please bear in mind.

On returning to his stool, Ebenezer found that he would require for some days to spend an extra hour or two in posting his books. At six o'clock, therefore, on the evening of the day on which he resumed work, he was alone in the office. He had been copying an invoice into a huge, fat volume, and it was not until the scratching of his pen had ceased with the completion of the copy that he perceived his solitude.

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He shook himself, yawned, slid off his stool, and lounged out of the space railed off for the confidential clerk and himself, and looked about him in the common office.

Seven hours of the musty smell of sheep-skin binding, mingled with the more pungent odour of red ink, had not overcome a spice of novelty in the routine interrupted for a fortnight, and in the dingy room, the aspect of which had not once crossed his mind during his holiday. He examined with subdued interest a curious mark on the lid of a desk which had once been his. He even traced its course with a lead pencil, as he had been in the habit of doing in the past. He wrote his initials with his finger in the dust on a table where a jug of water and a foggy-looking tumbler stood. Then he sat down in an armchair beside the stove, and looked across at 'Eagle's Shadow.' It was a very black mark now, for, though still called after him, each succeeding office-boy had given it another coat. There was no fire

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in the stove; so he leant his arms on the top of it, and gazed silently at the rough silhouette on the wall. His life rose up before him, and he became very sombre. For about an hour he sat staring at the crude shape. Shortly after seven he started, rubbed his eyes, and glared across the stove in the greatest astonishment. Then he rubbed his eyes again, but the source of his astonishment remained.

The shape had become a little boy reading a book.

The boy looked up and said, 'Hillo!'

'Hillo!' echoed Eaglesham mechanically.

'Who are you?' said the boy.

'Ebenezer Eaglesham. Who are you?'

'I'm the son of Mr Herbert Spencer's "independent observer." Where am I?'

'This is the office of Messrs Clay, Clod and M'Latchy.'

'What funny names!' said the boy, laughing. 'Do you know my father?'

'I've read about him in Mr Spencer's *Study of Sociology*.'

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'Have you, now? What a clever man Mr Spencer must have been!'

'Oh, he's not dead yet!'

'Get away! He's been dead more than five thousand years.'

'Nonsense! He's writing his own life just now.'

'Well, now, that's funny. Do you know what year this is?'

'Yes; it's 1886.'

'It's nothing of the sort. It's 8020. See,' said the boy, showing Eaglesham the title-page of his book, 'there's the date —8020.'

'So it is! Where do you come from?'

'Nowhere. This is the world, isn't it?'

'Yes, but what country?'

'Country! Do you live in a country?'

'Yes; in Scotland, the northern part of Great Britain.'

'How funny! I'm reading about Great Britain here. Since my father wrote the observation quoted by Mr Spencer, we have learned much more about the pre-historic ages. Manuscripts, and books, and

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lots of things have been found, preserved deep down in the glacial strata; and this is a boy's book telling a story founded on information obtained from these old writings.'

'Most extraordinary!'

'Isn't it! Here are you living in 1886; and here's me living in 8020, talking together in the office of Clay, Clod and M'Latchy. I wonder how I came here.'

'So do I,' said Eaglesham.

'I suppose I'll go away just as I came.'

'I suppose so.'

'It's a very interesting book this. Would you like to hear some of it?'

'I would indeed.'

'I'll read you a bit of it, then.'

The boy turned back to the beginning of his book, saying, 'You must know that this is the story of the first historical boy. There is a preliminary chapter which shows who and what were the English, his ancestors. It explains what it was that first started the atmospheric and other changes which gradually reduced the inhabitants of

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the world to two—the human inhabitants, you know—one, a little boy, who wakened up in the morning at the North Pole, to find himself, as he thought, alone in the world; and the other, a little girl, who wakened up on the same morning at the South Pole with the same thought. The story is how these two found each other after stupendous adventures. Now, I'll read you the preliminary chapter, and I think you'll find it very interesting.'

The little boy cleared his throat, and read what follows, viz., the first chapter of the historical romance entitled *The First Boy.*

'Our knowledge of the history and geography of the world as it was before our era, even my youngest reader may remember is still in its infancy. We know most about a portion of land which belonged to our forefathers, and lay in what was termed the North Temperate Zone. It was called Britain, and seems to have been an island. The inhabitants were called English.

'The human inhabitants of the earth were not then one race, speaking one

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language. They were divided into many species, each species having a different dress, a different language, and a separate territory, the boundaries of the last being a constant source of dispute. Some of my young readers may remember the shudder which passed over the whole world one morning when the press announced authentically that our predecessors in this globe had for thousands of years habitually settled the most trifling disputes by what they called *War*. We have been able to make out from certain of their writings that these people never themselves realised to the full the horrors of this devilish art—for it became an art, and had professors who lived by it alone. It cannot, therefore, be possible for us to comprehend in any due degree the misery brought about by its practice. According to its success in *War* was a people great. Now the English were the greatest warriors, and consequently the greatest and most enlightened people in the world for many hundreds of years. From our knowledge of their

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manners and customs this fact tells us in what a terribly savage state the other peoples must have been, especially a race called the French, who were the neighbours of the English, but, from certain statements in the writings of the latter, a people most unlike them in all good qualities.

'Many of the manners and customs of the English are inexplicable. For example, the name of one of their great institutions, *Rich-and-Poor*, conveys no meaning to us. One feature, however, a very expert ethnologist has been able to make out. By its establishment all people were divided into two classes or castes, viz., those who had nothing to do, and had all the good things of life at their disposal; and those who had all the work to do, and in return received, very grudgingly from the others, food and time to sleep. Sometimes I think that this must have been a much worse institution even than *War*. Traces are not wanting in the writings of those unfortunate people of an inclination to rebel against this institution; but, as one

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of their thinkers said, they were enchanted, and could only submit.

'There seems to have been a time when Britain lost its supremacy. The chief cause of this period of eclipse, which was not of long duration, arose from injudicious treatment of the numerous colonies established by the English in various parts of the world. These offshoots were in some cases allowed to straggle pretty much as they pleased; in others, trained in a manner contrary to their actual bent; in all mismanaged. Britain, a small over-populated island, was no longer able to cope single-handed with any of the powerful peoples of Europe—the name of the large territory inhabited by the French, Germans and Russians. These nations, all of them related by blood and language to the English, had for centuries been at war among themselves. But there had grown up an uncontrollable hatred of Britain. While the other nations had been wasting their energies in fighting each other, the English had amassed much more than their

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share of the world's wealth, and had acquired all the most valuable lands. Taking advantage of the estrangement of the English colonies from the mother-land, the nations of Europe formed an alliance for the overthrow of the British Empire. They combined their fleets, and sent two millions of men to invade the hated island. So great had been the breach between its colonies and Britain, that the Europeans did not think it necessary to take the former into account. Their whole power was concentrated against Britain; and in spite of the opposition of the English fleet, until that time invincible, a landing was effected. For the first time during more than six hundred years a foreign army trod British soil. The captain of the British forces, unable to face such a mass of men in the open country, retired to London, the metropolis of the island. It is impossible for us to understand what London was; all we know is, that it was an immense place called a city, crowded with people.

'When the English army retreated to

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London it was followed by throngs of refugees from all parts of the country, until the city contained more than double its ordinary population. It was gorged with humanity, and the influx of the panic-stricken folk had to cease. A cordon of men—actual *soldiers*, as they called their professional fighters, could not be spared—soon surrounded the city, and there was an end to all ingress or egress except by order of the captain. An effective circumvallation was rapidly improvised, and the siege began.

'Contemporary accounts hitherto discovered are few, meagre and contradictory; but we are able to give a short statement of the main features of the siege. There seems, first of all, to have been a pitched battle, in which the English were badly beaten, and driven behind their fortifications. Then the invaders began to throw explosives, killing many people and destroying many buildings. No attempt was made at first to fire the city, as the rank and file of the foreign

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armies would not hear of it, afraid lest too much of the expected loot might be destroyed.'

'By-the-bye,' exclaimed the boy, looking up from his book, 'I have skipped some footnotes explaining words. I know their meanings, having read the chapter before. I suppose, as you are living about the time these events happened, you will know the meanings of all the words that are obsolete to us?'

'Perfectly,' said Eaglesham. 'Go on.'

The boy resumed his reading.

'But the European hordes grew impatient, and several quarters of the city were set on fire, the invaders anticipating that in the confusion they would be enabled to force an entrance. This ruse, however, failed, and the enemy withdrew to their trenches. A truce of several days was asked for and granted. The English rightly judged that the time was to be occupied in preparation for a general attack, and they set themselves to devise means to repel it. They had ammunition and ex-

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plosives of extraordinary kinds, the nature and the employment of which are alike riddles to us. One of the numerous stratagems of the besieged we are enabled to describe. Between the city and the external fortifications there extended a belt varying from a hundred to a thousand yards. Many houses were in this space, but they were tenanted only by soldiers on duty. By a superhuman effort a great number of rails were laid across this zone, and all the available engines and railway-carriages, charged with explosives and missiles, were placed on them. On the expiry of the truce, as was expected, a furious onslaught began on all sides. Some resistance was made as a blind, but soon all the English withdrew behind the trains. With hideous clamour the enemy rushed like a boiling sea into the awful trap. Some hesitated for a moment, suspecting an ambush, but the thought of the enormous wealth within their grasp urged them on. The trains were all ready; the electric wires all con-

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nected with a central battery. At once, at sixty miles an hour, some thousands of death-laden waggons ploughed through the appalled masses of men. In the preceding events of the siege close on half a million of the enemy had fallen; the remainder by this desperate stratagem was annihilated. We, who know death only as a cessation of life when the complement of years is ended, can but shudder and forget that such a doom was once fulfilled. No shout of victory rose from the affrighted Londoners, nor were they allowed time to realise the success of their murderous device. While crowds were yet thronging to the barriers, the drums beat to arms, the bells hammered from all the steeples, and the people, with murmured wonder and questioning faces, surged into the streets and squares where their chief men dwelt. The news was soon published. A second army had been perceived by the balloon watchman marching from the north. A groan went through the whole city; shrieks and shouts and

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lamentations rose everywhere; but the order for all not under arms to retire to their houses was issued, and the streets were cleared for a breathing space — in some instances at the point of the bayonet.

'The second army, though not so well disciplined, outnumbered the first. Fully one-third of it consisted of barbarians from lands lying east of Europe. Their very dress was sufficient to strike terror to the hearts of less savage people; and they had strange music with them. The English army now suffered what it had often inflicted on others. In their own countries these barbarians had been defeated times without number by the English in *their* outlandish uniforms, with unknown music, and weapons apparently miraculous. But now the barbarians were the invaders, and the bulk of the English, panic-stricken, threw down their arms and fled. The unarmed populace was not slow to follow. The captain with a few hundred brave men surrounded one of their important buildings. We do not know of what nature this build-

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ing was; but the captain judged rightly that the foreigners would not care to destroy it. By this disposition of his forces one point at least was gained: each man could die fighting with his back to the wall.

'The second army, after the stupor caused by the sight of the blackened, bloody, and still smoking belt of exploded humanity had in a measure passed, broke all bounds of discipline. "Revenge!" in one terrible roar and a hundred dialects carried new fear to the distant fliers; while the stern ring in the city gripped their weapons and knew their time had come. In groups, in fragments of regiment, in twos and threes, heedless of the word of command, the avengers rushed on. There was no pillaging; destruction reigned. Hundreds of people, belated by greed or foolhardinesss, fell shrieking; street after street was set on fire, and for a time it seemed as if the whole city were about to perish. In vain the captains rode hither and thither, ordering and even slaying. What discipline could not do, the lust of spoil

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achieved. The immense wealth which lay to their hands had been forgotten in the first emotions of horror and vengeance; but blood and fire having taken the edge off these, and a sight of the treasure which was to be their principal pay having awakened a dread lest the prize should escape them, those who had taken the lead in destruction began to organise salvage parties, and in a short time most of the fires were under control. Lust of pillage, however, proved as strong as that of vengeance; discipline was further from reasserting itself than ever, and the leaders had given up in despair, when it was bruited about that a remnant of the British force still stood under arms. On the spread of this news among the common soldiers the slumbering desire for vengeance woke up unsatiated, and a great body of them were soon in their ranks again.

'It was many hours since the last of the English had surrounded their famous building. They could have fought, oh!

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so well! and died so manfully! But they had not bargained for this waiting. Every face was white, every eye blood-shot with anguish; some fainted, and one man dropped dead. Only the courage and endurance of their captain supported them. He rode round at intervals with a word and a smile for everyone. They were at a considerable distance from the outskirts of the city, and during most part of their long vigil were utterly at a loss, except for the flames, as to what was going forward. At last some idea of the disorderly state of the enemy dawned upon their leader, and a wild hope of defeating them piecemeal flashed through his brain; but, while this was in contemplation, word came from the watchman that a third army was approaching from the west. Then the blood surged up into the faces of these men; fire sprang from their eyes; and, as if they had drunk deeply of strong wine, they shook off the drowsier hopelessness, and steeled their spirits with despair.

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But word came that the standards of the new army were banners striped and starred; and with that a wail rose from the devoted ring, and strong men were convulsed with sobs. They knew by the banners that this army came from the United States—a country which had been their first great colony, but which, by their mismanagement, had broken from them altogether, and had latterly become a rival, though on moderately friendly terms. These banners told them that their very flesh and blood, speaking their own language, was come against them. They wept and cried aloud, and dashed themselves against the wall. It was not that their vanity was hurt; but that the sons of their great ancestors should come to rejoice in their final overthrow was more than they could bear.

'Suddenly shouts and a shot or two forced their tortured thoughts to a more pressing matter. The second army had found them out, and were pouring upon them by every approach, the barbarians

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in the van. On they came, firing recklessly. Steady and true when actual damage could be done, the English replied, and the attacking party fell back. Twice again they came on, after delivering their fire, and twice again they were compelled to retire. The Europeans held aloof, having no intention of wasting their lives as long as a barbarian was left; and the leaders would not allow artillery, as they wished to save the building.

'The first three onslaughts had been carelessly conducted, or rather not at all conducted; a fourth was to be made with greater regularity. The word had just been given to advance, when there came a blast of music. All paused to listen. Though the players were at a distance, a blare of trumpets and roll of drums pealed forth unmistakably the tune of "Rule, Britannia," the war-song of the English. The barbarians were the first to recognise it. They had heard it on many a battlefield; and now, coming as it were out of the sky, it demoralised

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them and they fled precipitately. At first the English did not believe their ears; but as the tune grew louder and louder doubt fled. Nobody, however, except the leader, guessed what was taking place. He ordered his men to form in front of the building; then he said simply, "The Yankees."

'A flash of eyes like lightning glimmered over the forlorn troop, and a hoarse, hysterical cry burst from their quivering lips, followed by a stupendous cheer.

'"Follow me!" cried the captain.

'Shouting their war-song at the pitch of their voices, and with the tears streaming down their faces, they dashed through the amazed Europeans, and reached the Yankees without the loss of a single man.

'For weeks the United States forces had been in Britain, friendly from the first. A third European army, guarding the coast, had been fought with many times before they reached London. The moment the way was clear, they had

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advanced, playing the English war-song to announce their presence and their amity.

'In vain do we look for details of the events succeeding the relief of London. The broad facts are these:—the European armies had to surrender; all the English-speaking races united in a great federation; and there is no trace of the recurrence of a general war.

'One May morning, a while after the close of the war, the English in Britain were taking a holiday. Peace, prosperity, and a considerable modification of the institution of *Rich-and-Poor* had improved the social condition in such a notable degree that some of the more sanguine were beginning to apply to their country the title, long disused, of "Merry England." In many places May-poles had been erected, and dancing and light-hearted festivity were going on in the open air, as in the times of their great poet Shakespeare — pretty much, from all that we can gather, in the manner of our own outdoor merry-makings.

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'Without any warning, while the mirth was at its height, a long, hollow whisper was borne inward from the western seaboard—a whisper so deep and far-reaching that it was heard even at Lowestoftness, the most easterly point in Britain. A stagnation in the air as if the earth had stood still followed, and then a wind began. It came from the north-east, and was at first pleasant and bracing, for the sun shone in a cloudless sky. Gradually and then rapidly the cold increased; the heavens grew grey, and snow began to fall. The ribbons were frozen to the May-poles; the hobby-horse and the dragon's case, thrown aside by the horror-stricken Morris-dancers, made fantastic shapes under the snow; barrels of ale left running froze at the tap with amber icicles. It is impossible to describe the terrors of that day and night. In twenty-four hours there was a change from the rosy blush and the green mantle of early summer to the nakedness and pallor of the depth of winter—such a winter as the country

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had never known, a winter that should last for ages. Britain was an iceberg. What had happened?

'The Nihilists, a party that wished for the overturn of all the institutions of their time in order to start afresh, had for many years been so silent that the world thought them entirely disorganised. This was not the case. Though silent, they had not been idle. A large body of them, not known to be Nihilists, had secured territory on an isthmus which connected the two divisions of the western world. Their professed intention was to establish a colony which should govern itself on principles absolutely altruistic. The English, to whom the land belonged, surrendered gladly. Ship-loads of emigrants, all Nihilists, crossed from the eastern world; and no one interfered with the new attempt to realise the golden age.

'Now the ocean between the eastern and western worlds was an immense oval whirlpool, called the Atlantic, and the outside

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sweep of it was known as the Gulf-stream. This whirlpool brought round to Europe some of the warmth acquired by the waters as they span round the Tropics, and so maintained the equable climate of the North Temperate Zone.'

Suddenly the boy vanished. There was nothing but the grimy shadow on the wall. Ebenezer Eaglesham speculated for some minutes on the means adopted by the Nihilists to divert the course of the Gulf-stream, for he thought that that must have been the way by which the change in the world's atmosphere had been wrought. He wondered if it could have been by an immense subterranean tunnel through Panama. Then he wondered what changes had followed which brought about the destruction of mankind, all except the hero and heroine of the story. Remembering, however, that the boy had been reading fiction to him, he concluded that it was not worth further consideration.

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Staring vacantly, and with hasty yet curiously exact movements like those of a somnambulist, he put past his books and went home.

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THE SALVATION OF NATURE

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THE SALVATION OF NATURE.

ON the day that Sir Wenyeve Westaway's World's Pleasance Bill became law, the happy baronet kissed his wife and said, 'Lily, darling, it has taken twenty years, but we have saved Nature.'

'Never mind, dear,' said Lady Westaway, who, though a true helpmeet, loved to quiz her husband, 'the time has not been wholly wasted.'

'Wholly wasted!' cried Sir Wenyeve, too much in earnest for even the mildest *persiflage*. 'The salvation of Nature is a task worthy of an antediluvian life-time.'

'In the longest life there is only one youth,' sighed Lady Westaway, as she left the library.

She was thirty-five years old, and her

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married life had been a continuous intrigue to bring about the fulfilment of her husband's dream. Now that his object was gained, she felt that her youth and prime had passed like a rout at the close of the season—stale, unenjoyed, immemorable. But she dressed beautifully on the night of her husband's triumph; and the subtler of her guests mistook the sadness in her eyes and voice for the exquisite melancholy which overcomes some natures when an arduous undertaking is accomplished.

The day after Sir Wenyeve's banquet celebrating the passage of his Bill, two thousand clerks and message boys posted two million copies of the following prospectus. The list of directors, financial agents, bankers, managers, and other uninteresting details are omitted.

THE WORLD'S PLEASANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

Incorporated under the Companies Acts.

Capital . . . £200,000,000.

Issue of 1,000,000 shares of £100 each, of

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which £50 is called up as follows:—£5 on application, £5 on allotment, £20 on May 1, and £20 on July 1. The remaining £50 per share is to form security for debentures.

The capital of the company is divided into 2,000,000 shares of £100 each, of which—

1,650,000 shares will be issued as ordinary shares, entitled to a cumulative dividend of 15 per cent. before the deferred shares participate in profit.

350,000 shares as deferred shares to be issued at £50 paid, which will not be entitled to participate in dividend until 15 per cent. has been paid on the paid up capital of the ordinary shareholders.

The deferred shares and 600,000 of the ordinary shares will be taken by the promoters in part payment of the price.

This company has been incorporated for the purpose of acquiring that part of Great Britain known as the kingdom of Scotland, with the outer and inner Hebrides and the Orkney and Shetland Isles.

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It is estimated that three-quarters of the capital of the company will be expended on the purchase of Scotland; the remainder to be devoted—

1. To the demolition of all manufactories, foundries, building-yards, railways, tramways, walls, fences, and all unnatural divisions, and of all buildings, with some few exceptions, of a later date than 1700 A.D.

2. To the purchase of a number of the Polynesian Islands.

3. To the importation of these islands and the distribution of their soil over the razed cities, towns, villages, etc.

When the land has thus been returned to the bosom of Nature, it will remain there unmolested for a year or two. At the end of this nursing-time, Scotland, having been in a manner born again, will be called by its new name, 'The World's Pleasance'; and visitors will be admitted during the six months of summer and autumn on payment of £50 for each individual per month. At the rate of 100,000 visitors per month, this will give an

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income of £30,000,000. Figures like these need no comment.

Every species of tent, marquee, awning, and canvas or waterproof erection; every species of rowing or sailing vessel; and every species of rational land conveyance will be permitted in the World's Pleasance; but there must not be laid one stone upon another; nor shall steam, electricity or hydraulic power be used for any purpose, except for the working of Professor Penpergwyn's dew-condensers. One of these machines will be erected at John o' Groat's House, and another at Kirkmaiden. Professor Penpergwyn has recently, at the request of the promoters of this company, devoted all his time to perfecting his celebrated apparatus; and we are happy to be able to state that the cloud-compelling attachment for withholding rain from an area greater than half that of Scotland, now works with the requisite power, regularity and delicacy; while the dew-condensers proper can, at a moment's notice, fill the air with any

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degree of moisture, from the filmiest mist to a deluge.

The promoters of this company congratulate themselves, and the peoples of every continent, on the salvation of a fragment of the Old World from the jaws of Civilisation; and in conclusion they think they cannot do better than quote the peroration of Sir Wenyeve Westaway's great speech on the motion for the third reading of the Bill with which his name will be associated to the end of time. The honourable baronet said in conclusion, 'If you would loosen the shackles which bind the poetry and art of the day; if you would give a little ease to the voiceless, suffering earth, crushed in the iron shell of civilisation, like the skull of a martyr in that Venetian head-screw which ground to a pulp bone and brain and flesh; if, in a word, you would provide a home, a second Academe, a new Arcadia for poetry and art, these illustrious outcasts; if you would save Nature, you will pass this Bill. Make Scotland the World's Pleasance, and I venture to predict that the benefits spring-

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ing from such a recreation-ground to Art and Morality will be so immense, that the world will bless, as long as the earth endures, the legislators who licensed the creation of a second Eden.'

The demand for shares during the week in which the prospectus was published was more than double the supply. Ling-long, the Chinese perpetual president of the United States, applied for a thousand; but his Perpetuity had to be contented with ten. All the kings and queens in the world took as many as could be allotted to them. The ancient list of the world's seven wonders was cancelled, and the company's palatial and labyrinthine offices on the English banks of the Tweed became the initial wonder of a new one. And Sir Wenyeve Westaway? He was made a peer of the realm, and the company, in the joy of success, voted him for two lives the sole right of visiting the island of Arran.

Professor Penpergwyn superintended the

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destruction of civilised Scotland. Electrite was the explosive used, on account of the precision with which the upheaval produced by a given charge could be calculated. It was possible with this remarkable invention to destroy one half of a building, and leave the other undamaged; for the *débris* fell back, like an ill-thrown boomerang, exactly to the spot whence it had shot up. The Professor was truly a great man. When all the railways and tramways had been removed, and sold at great profit to the Chinese; when all the wires had been prepared, and half the known tar, and every tar-barrel beneath the sun had been duly distributed among the buildings to be deracinated, he let the world into the secret of the broad and lofty piers which he had erected on many parts of the Scottish coast, at various distances from the shore. From them the public could view the great fire, on payment to the Professor of three guineas per head. He provided no conveyance to or from the piers. He guaranteed nothing, either regarding their

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security or the width of view which they commanded. You paid your money and took your chance. Two million people bought tickets. The Professor's profit, deducting the cost of the piers, and of the huge army of ticket-collectors, was £2,000,000.

On the last night of the year, Scotland was set on fire. The Professor had utilised the Scotch telegraph wires. By their means all his mines were connected with the battery at which he sat in London, waiting impatiently till ten should strike. In the moment of the last stroke he touched the machine; then he set off for Kamtschatka with his wife and his only daughter, a child of seven years.

As will be surmised, this extraordinary man was not the only individual who waited with impatience till ten o'clock that night. All England, all the world was *en fête*. Miniature explosions were prepared in every town and hamlet, in nearly every street and lane in the four quarters of the globe—each little mine surrounded by a restless mob. But the most impatient of all the inhabi-

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tants of the earth were the two millions of men and women who crowded the Professor's piers.

At a minute from ten, the human zone girdling Scotland was as silent as death. All the clocks in all the towers and steeples in the doomed country had been wound up for that night. There was no wind, and the air was frosty. When the hour rang—the last hour that should ever ring in Scotland — pealing in many tones, but harmonised by the distance to the ears of the listeners, so that poets thought of swan-songs and the phœnix, and the most prosaic remembered the death-knell—a strong thrill passed through the multitude and a rustle went about from pier to pier, like a wind wandering among the woods. Not a star could be seen. Scotland was only discerned as a more intense blackness in the bosom of the night. The silence after the striking of the hour was deeper than before — so deep that the people heard faintly the petty plash of the waves against the piers.

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Suddenly the Cheviots were tipped with fire, and two million faces grew pale. In the same breathless instant these faces, rank after rank, loomed out in the light of the burning country, as the land-wide flash sped over the mountains to Cape Wrath, and a sound as if the thunder of a century had been gathered into one terrific, long-rolling peal shook the whole sea, and forced every head to bend. Then again silence and blackness, uttermost, appalling. All the people trembled. A wife said to her husband in the lowest whisper ever breathed, 'I am going mad.'

'And I too,' he replied hoarsely.

A sage old man beside them, who overheard their whispers, cried 'Hurrah!'

It broke the spell. From pier to pier the word ran until the shout became general.

'Hurrah! hurrah!'—the most voluminous cheer on record—and with that the people fell a-talking.

'Has it failed?' was the universal question. The wise old fellow who had started the cheer thought not.

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'The explosions are over,' he said, 'but the fires will soon break out.'

And he was right. Even as he spoke tongues of flame were jetting up. It was then five minutes past ten. In another minute, Scotland looked like a huge leviathan, spotted and brindled with eyes and stripes of fire. Where the towns were thick these ran into each other, and soon the Lowlands were wrapped in one glowing sheet. The smoke wallowed on high, and dipped and writhed in and out among the flames. Description shrivels before such a scene.

'Behold,' cried Lord Westaway, 'the altar on which the world sacrifices to Nature for the sin of Civilisation!'

It is not known when the last flame of the great fire went out; but in the end of February the first fleet of vessels from Polynesia arrived in the Clyde. They landed their cargoes among the ruins of Glasgow; and the *débris* on the Broomielaw was soon covered with the dust of the coral insect.

In six months the reclamation of Scotland

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to the bosom of Nature was completed by a million men, who wrought in three relays, night and day. Professor Penpergwyn's piers were then destroyed; and a cordon of five hundred war-vessels was placed along the coast, and not a human foot trod Scottish earth—or Polynesian earth in Scotland—for two years.

Lord Westaway, on the day the company granted him the Island of Arran, had shut himself up in his study. Three hours he brooded, and then summoned his son, Lewellyn, a handsome boy, in his eleventh year.

'Lewellyn,' said Lord Westaway, 'I am going to prepare Arran for you. You will enter into possession on your twenty-first birthday. I will make it the most remarkable island in the world.'

'How will you do that, papa?'

'Do not inquire; don't try to discover from any source; your surprise and pleasure ten years hence will be the greater.'

The boy, who worshipped his father, agreed to this unhesitatingly.

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The World's Pleasance brought down the world. At the close of the first season in which the rejuvenated Scotland was open to the public, instead of the fifteen per cent. expected by the promoters, a dividend of thirty per cent. was declared on all the shares. From many glowing contemporary accounts of the wonders of the great pleasure-ground, I select the following letter of the young Empress of the East to her Prime Minister, whom she afterwards married, as being the least overcharged :—

Extract from the Letter of the Empress of the East.

'We landed in the end of June on the shore where Leith once stood. I was carried up to Edinburgh in a litter, the rugged nature of the ground preventing any other mode of conveyance. A Greek temple-like building—formerly a picture-gallery, I believe—had been prepared for us. The rent of it is enormous, as the

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company put up to auction all the habitable buildings in the country. This was rendered necessary by the battles which took place for the possession of historical or finely situated houses. At first the directors thought the fighting would lend an additional charm to life here; but when Ling-long, the American president, besieged the Emperor of the French in Holyrood with bows and arrows and battering-rams —a bye-law forbids the use of all explosives —and took the palace with the loss of several lives on both sides, interference was deemed expedient. All fighting, except in the tourney, is now done with quarter-staves. Every third day we have a quarrel with some other potentate about a fishing-stream or a glade for hawking in. My greatest enemy is the King of England, who lives in Edinburgh Castle. We are very warm friends and model disputants, complying graciously with the bye-law which adjudges victory to the side that first draws blood. Although the King's retinue exceeds mine, my Tartar giant, by his superior strength

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and agility, manages, as a rule, to finish the fight in our favour.

'I will just go on scribbling in my woman's way as I have begun. The next thing that occurs to me is the splendour of Edinburgh. It is pronounced by everybody the most beautiful piece of the juvenile country. Scientific men are much perplexed by it, as indeed they are by all the newly naturalised land. It would seem that at present there is a struggle going on between the imported tropical vegetation and the native plants and grasses. The latter have conquered in Edinburgh. It is covered with young heather and broom and bracken, and only here and there a dwarfed alien plant appears. The billows of purple and green and gold toss about in what was the New Town, and, swirling across the valley, roll up the High Street to throw splashes of colour here and there on the Castle esplanade.

'We are clad in sixteenth century costumes; the King of England and his Court in dresses of the time of the Charleses.

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Nearly all the Americans go about in Greek robes, as gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines. The French Court is a miniature of that of Louis XIV. The Russians are dressed in Lincoln green; the Czar is called Robin Hood, and the Czarina, Maid Marian. We have no clocks; the dial is our only timekeeper. It is all a great masque, from the country itself to the pot-boys and scullions. Last week I rode as far north as Perth, and seemed to journey through all the times and peoples of Europe. Here, in a broad meadow, we saw a tournament, where some princess sat as queen of love and beauty. A few miles further on we passed a water-party of the Restoration, with music and laughter. Then a pavilion gleamed white among the trees, and there two knights of the Round Table hung out their blazoned shields. Up rode, with lofty air, Don Quixote, wearing the veritable helmet of Mambrino. Behind, all amort, on a sorry ass, ambled the wisest of fools, dear old Sancho Panza. "What, ho! vile recreants!" cried the knight of La

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Mancha, and struck exultingly one of the shields. We stood aside to watch the encounter, and beheld him of the sorrowful countenance go down before the spear of Launcelot of the Lake. Anon, Mary Queen of Scots, followed by Douglases and Graemes and Setons, sped by, chasing a stag of ten. "Splendeur de Dieu!" cried a deep voice in front; and a body of Norman knights charged the Scotsmen. But after a brief battle, William the Conqueror and Mary Stuart agreed to hunt together.

'O me! my heart is sick with dreaming over these old times. And yet, although I know it is the signal for my return, I long for the day when you are to come, my faithful friend.

'I have some, and shall have more, very pleasant stories to tell you of a party of Germans, who have undertaken to act through all Shakespeare's comedies, with the whole World's Pleasance for stage, naming places after localities in the plays, and travelling about as the scene requires. They have already acted two comedies,

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and in each of them real passions and events have grown out of the fiction, so that the company has lost half its original members owing to elopements and quarrels. This is a long letter, and I am tired.'

One result of the success of the World's Pleasance Company was the establishment of similar companies in nearly every country. The Americans reclaimed Peru and California. The Empress of the East was the principal promoter of a company for the naturalisation of Greece. The French reclaimed Provence; the Germans the Rhine Provinces. Italy was given over entirely to Nature; and the whole Italian nation became brigands. This country was much frequented by young people in search of adventure. The African Republics made pleasances of Algeria, and the country about the great lakes; and a gigantic Asiatic company bought up the Himalayas and the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. For eight years all these pleasance companies paid great percentages, and immense fortunes

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were made. Every other man was a millionaire. Then it seemed that the world came bankrupt. Thousands of people committed suicide. Famine followed bankruptcy; and after it came a new disease. It began in India, and travelled almost as fast as the news of its ravages. People fled to their pleasances for refuge, but the pest was there before them. Cities were emptied in a day. In every town and hamlet the last to die thought himself the last man, and posed mentally as such. London was swept of life like the deck of a vessel by a mountainous wave. In the World's Pleasance people wandered about in twos and threes, shunning strangers, digging roots, dropping dead. Most of them wore their holiday costumes. Some few carried bottles of wine, and laughed and sang. But the time for such desperate jollity soon passed, and the plague remained.

In the beginning of July, an old man of great freshness and vigour appeared in that part of the Pleasance formerly known

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as Ayrshire. He approached everybody he met. To those whom he could stay, he put this question, 'Do you know anything of Lewellyn Westaway?' A languid shake of the head was all the answer he ever got. So many kept him aloof, that he resorted to calling out his question at the pitch of his voice. For an entire forenoon he did this; and shortly after midday a man dropped out of a tree almost on his head, and said, 'I am Lewellyn Westaway.'

'And I,' said the old man, 'am Professor Penpergwyn.'

The Professor wore a white hat and a black frock coat, old and rusty. Lewellyn was dressed in a purple velvet doublet, and from his close-fitting cap a feather hung gracefully, and mingled with his long hair. The contrast was striking.

'What do you want with me?' asked Lewellyn.

'Why are you not in Arran?'

'In Arran?'

'Yes; you are twenty-one now, and the island awaits you.'

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'I had forgotten about it.'

'Drink this, and go there at once.'

'What's this? and why should I go there at once?'

'This,' said the Professor, opening the morocco case he had offered Lewellyn, and holding up a little vial, 'is an infallible remedy for the plague.'

Lewellyn laughed scornfully.

'Faithless, faithless!' cried the Professor, looking earnestly with his strong, convincing eyes into those of the young man.

Lewellyn was bound by his gaze; and the Professor continued, 'I tell you, who may die this moment, who must die within a week, that this will save you, and you laugh in my face. Will you take it or not?'

Lewellyn took it.

'Drink it.'

He did so in silence.

'Now listen to me.'

The Professor leaned against a tree, while Lewellyn stood meekly before him.

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'First tell me — are your father and mother dead?'

'They are.'

'Then you are as free as I could wish you to be, unless you are married.'

'I am not.'

'Good. Many years ago I discovered this disease in Kamtschatka. It is really nothing more or less than hunger, the millionth power of hunger. I have not time to explain it. It must often have appeared in the world. Probably it has always existed actively, but never till this great famine has it fairly got wing. I recognised its power in Kamtschatka, and saw that if it should get strength from feeding on a few thousand lives, it would kill the world. Its power and velocity increase with its progress. It knows no crisis. In a few days it will be as swift as the lightning. I began in Kamtschatka to try for a remedy. I laboured for years, and then had to come west for materials. It was during that visit that I burned Scotland. On my return to Kamtschatka

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I found that a filtrate I had left standing had clarified itself, and was, in fact, the required remedy. For the last ten years I have been trying to repeat the process, but have always failed. When I heard of the breaking out of the pest I came at once from Kamtschatka. I had sufficient of my remedy to save two lives. My wife is dead, so I give one half to you. Now, sir, go to Arran.'

'Why give me half?'

'Is that your gratitude? Had I not found you I should have given it to the finest young fellow I could meet with. But ask no more questions. Do as I bid you. You will find it to your advantage. You will never see me more. Within a fortnight all who have not drunk of my medicine will be dead.'

'What! Are we two to be the only men left alive, and are we to part for ever?'

'Yes. Your father has saved Nature, but in a way he little expected. Goodbye for ever.'

Lewellyn realised but faintly what the

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old man has said with such authority, and stood irresolute.

'Go,' said the Professor; and Lewellyn, like one under a spell, hurried down to the coast. He was hardly out of sight when Professor Penpergwyn dropped dead.

On the shore Lewellyn found many boats—some floating, some high and dry —all masterless. He chose the one he judged the swiftest sailer, and was soon flying across the firth with a strong east wind behind him. As he neared Arran he saw a white flag run up a short pole on a little eminence near the beach. He was too much battered with wonder to feel this new stroke. Involuntarily he steered for the flag. When he was some hundred yards from land he observed below the flag-pole, seated on a rock, a figure like that of a woman, motionless and watching him intently. In landing, his boat occupied all his attention, so that when he stepped ashore and found a tall girl standing with her back to him, but within reach of his arm, the effect upon him was almost as

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great as if he had not seen her before. He stood still, expecting her to turn round; but she remained as she was for some moments, fingering a bow she carried. A quiver full of arrows was slung across her shoulder. Her dress, of some dark blue homely stuff, came to her ankles. She wore shoes of untanned leather, and a belt of the same, in which was stuck a short sword. On her head she had a little fur cap, and her short golden brown hair curled on her shoulders. Slowly she turned and gave him a side glance. Then she looked him full in the face and sighed deeply, but as if some doubt had been resolved to her satisfaction. He fell back a step at the splendour of her eyes. Her face was broad and her complexion delicate, though browned. He hardly noticed her low forehead, her straight eyebrows, her strong, round chin, and full red mouth; her eyes held him. He did not think of their colour. He was subdued by their intense expression. They seemed to pierce him with intuition, and at the same time to bathe him in a soft, warm light.

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She spoke, and her voice seemed to caress him; but all she said was, 'Do you come from Professor Penpergwyn?'

He bowed. If he spoke he felt the vision would vanish.

'Have you drunk the other half?'

He bowed again, understanding her to mean the other half of the Professor's remedy.

'Did he tell you there was only enough for two?'

He found his tongue and answered 'Yes,' whispering as intensely as she did, but wondering why there should be so much passion about the matter.

'Do you know who drank the rest?'

'I supposed it was the Professor.'

She sighed again, a deep sigh of satisfaction, and sank on the beach sobbing. Lewellyn, after a moment's thought, knelt beside her and held one of her hands in both his. She made no resistance. In a little she dried her tears with her disengaged hand, shook back her hair and looked him in the face.

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'I'm so glad to see you,' she said; 'I have been alone here for a week. You needn't ask any questions. I'll tell you it all at once. Professor Penpergwyn is my papa. Is he alive?'

'He was four hours ago.'

'He may be dead now, though. Poor papa! He would always have his own way. Papa expected to find you. When he didn't, he left me all alone and went to search for you. We brought some provisions and weapons with us, and I have managed to get on very well. But I'm glad you've come. *Are* you Lewellyn Westaway?' she cried sharply, springing to her feet in sudden doubt.

'Yes, I am—Lord Westaway, if it's of any consequence.'

'I'm very glad. Tell me what was the name of your father's steward?'

'Dealtry—Henry Dealtry?'

'It was; it was!'

The lady smiled, and looked as happy and self-satisfied as if she had exercised the most extraordinary subtlety in putting

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this question, and as if Lewellyn's answer were conclusive proof of his identity.

'But you must be hungry,' she said suddenly. 'Come.'

She led him to a tent at the entrance of a little glen, and bade him sit on the turf at the door, while she went in. A pleasant odour came through the canvas, and he heard the clatter of dishes—a very wholesome sound to one who had been living a half-savage life for several weeks.

Soon she cried, 'Come in,' and he entered.

'I began to prepare this little dinner when I saw your boat far, far away.'

He thanked her, and they ate in silence, stealing shy glances at each other, and feeling a little uncomfortable. But being hungry they did not mind that much.

'Now,' she said, resuming her frankness, not perfectly however, 'if you're quite satisfied, come and I'll show you the wonders of your island. You know your father promised you it should be the most remarkable island in the world.'

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'And so it is,' he said, looking at her steadily.

She blushed, and said nothing.

They had not taken many steps up the glen when a roar shook the ground.

He stopped in wonder. She answered the question in his eyes.

'That's the old lion. He's the only one left.'

'The only one!'

'Are you frightened? He's not at all dangerous. He's got hardly any teeth, and he just crawls. I'll tell you all about it now, although I meant to show it to you before explaining. My father and I met Dealtry, your father's steward, in London, and he told us about the island being yours, and how your father promised you it should be the most remarkable island in the world, and how in fulfilment of that promise he stocked it with all kinds of wild beasts and birds and insects, intending it to be a great hunting-ground. Dealtry told us you would be sure to be here.'

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'I had forgotten all about it.'

'Well, except this old lion, all the originals are dead. But there are many elephants, lions, tigers, bears, leopards, hyenas, and beasts I don't know the names of — all very little, and not at all fierce. They're fast dying out, too, for they can't get any food. You'll hardly see a deer, and even rabbits are scarce. There's a tiger!'

Lewellyn saw a striped beast about the size of a Newfoundland dog slinking across the path before them. While he looked at it curiously, something whistled through the air, and with a scream the beast rolled over, pierced to the heart by one of Miss Penpergwyn's arrows.

'I always shoot them,' she said, 'and you will do so, too; for we must get rid of them. That was papa's order.

Lewellyn sighed, and thought of *his* father. This was the end of his high-pitched imaginings, and passionate endeavours to realise what others would never dream of imagining. A melancholy,

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profounder than that which was normal to all high-strung souls at that dread time, seized him and was reflected by his companion. They wandered about the island, hand in hand, saying little. Every foreign beast, bird and insect that they saw, all small, and much less brilliant than in their native climes, increased his melancholy until it became almost an agony, and he was glad when they reached the tent again. She bade him sit once more at the entrance while she got supper ready.

'And while you are waiting,' she said, 'you can read this. My father left it for you, and I forgot about it till now.'

Lewellyn took from her a sealed letter, which he read slowly and with much emotion. He had been thinking over it for some minutes when he was summoned to supper.

'Come out,' he said.

Miss Penpergwyn obeyed.

'Stand beside me while I read this to you. There is no date. "You will be beginning to understand by this time. I had

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a long struggle with myself; but my life would soon have ended and hers was just beginning. I felt sure I would find you. I had known your father, and had seen you in your boyhood; I knew your character, and that you must be a strong and handsome man. The world begins again with you two." That is all. What is your name, Miss Penpergwyn?'

'Lynden.'

'Lynden! a strange name.'

'My father was a strange man.'

He took both her hands, and drew her towards him.

'Lynden Westaway,' he said.

She trembled; then, dropping her head on his shoulder, whispered between a sob and a laugh, 'My husband.'

. . . . . .

Next morning Lewellyn said, 'I've been thinking over all you did yesterday, and there are two things I don't understand. Why did you sigh so deeply and gladly when I said I supposed your father had drunk the other half of the remedy?'

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'Because I was glad that you hadn't taken it knowingly from him.'

'And why did you stand with your back to me when I landed, and then sigh so happily again when I turned round?'

'I stood with my back to you because I was afraid you might not be easy to love; and I sighed with happiness when I saw how handsome you were. Oh! how bold you must have thought me! I imagined that my father would have told you about me, and *all* he meant, and that was why I was so frank. I wanted to put you at your ease, my dear—to meet you half way, love.'

THE END

Colston & Coy., Limited, Printers, Edinburgh

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